

BLUE BOOK

Magazine of Adventure for MEN, by MEN ★ FEBRUARY 25 c



This Is Our Land

It—The First Furrow

Painted by

HERBERT M. STOOPS

The Bronze Warrior

A Complete Novel

by DAVID CHENEY

Lucky Man-of-War

Battle Story of the Washington

by LT. PATRICK VINCENT

At Two Eight

by JOHN McINTYRE

Who's Who *in this* Issue

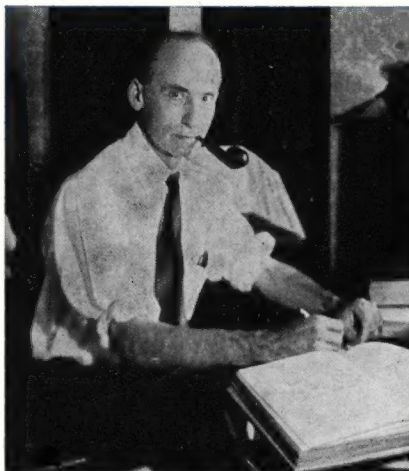
David Cheney

BORN in Marlborough, Massachusetts, the son of the Rev. George Hamline and Eleanor (Robinson) Cheney, of the tenth generation of Cheneys in America. The author's third-great-grandfather William was a Minuteman who served under Putnam and was killed at Bunker Hill.

David Cheney sold his first short story to old *St. Nicholas Magazine* when Mary Mapes Dodge was editor, while he was a student in Clinton High School; served the old *New Bedford Standard* for many years as reporter and feature-story writer, and contributed to leading Sunday newspapers and magazines. In World War I, he was sent by the American "Y" to Italy, where he was editor of the official organ in Italy and engaged in international relationship work. While in Bologna, he was sent to the ancient University of Bologna to improve his Italian, and studied archeology, which, with his work at Harvard College under the late Dr. Roland B. Dixon, resulted later in his writing historical romances of the ancient Mediterranean world.

He taught English composition at Tufts College, upon his return to this country, and later Advanced English Composition at Harvard College. During his latter teaching, he headed the course in Advanced English Composition, under auspices of Colleges of Greater Boston, given in the Boston Public Library. He was a pioneer in radio broadcasting; gave the first travel-lecture series ever given over the air, from old Station WGI, Amrad; and originated, while on the faculty of Tufts, college-sponsored lectures. His historical romances have been widely used as collateral reading in schools and colleges.

David Cheney's works include: "The Golden Goblin," a fantasy; "Son of Minos," now in a new edition, and still alive after fifteen years—the first of the Cretan Trilogy; "Treasure of Tyron," the second in the trilogy (BLUE BOOK, January, 1945); and "The Bronze Warrior," in this issue, the last; and "Bow Strings," a tale of Twelfth Century England. He has also for years been working on a monumental dictionary of the *ideas* of our language—a book intended to serve as an author's guide to the right word. Married; two daughters, both married, and three grandsons, aged from one to four.



David Cheney



Patrick Tiffany Vincent, Lt. U.S.N.



Horace Bryan

Patrick Vincent

Lt. VINCENT was born March 17, 1917, twenty days before our entry into the first World War, but he was amply represented by his father, Lt. Col. Charles R. Vincent. His adolescent years were those of a normal American boy. He prepped at Francis Parker in Chicago, where he captained the football team, and at the Rawling School, Rawling, New York. He matriculated at Dennison University in Ohio. He was a Beta Theta Pi and won distinction as an end on the football varsity. In the newspaper balloting for the All-Star Team, he was given 389,000 votes. He helped to pay his way through college by spending his summers as a Life Guard on Chicago beaches.

Lt. Vincent was commissioned in March '41 and spent until March '44 aboard the U.S.S. *Washington*. He was then assigned the *Missouri*, serving as air defense officer until November '44, when he was stricken with infantile paralysis. Treated by the Kenny method used officially by the Navy, he recovered completely, and joined the *Minneapolis* in June, '45.

Horace Bryan

I WAS born in western Arkansas in 1908. My father was a coal-miner, and so were my brothers; and so was I. My first regular job, however, was farming; from twelve to sixteen, I was chief plowhand, pea-picker, and sprout-cutter on our forty acres. That farm was a way Father had of keeping us boys out of mischief until we were sixteen, when we started digging coal. I've worked at about a dozen different trades and professions, but wouldn't claim to be an expert at any of them, except mining and ships. I got in the Merchant Marine, one jump ahead of my Draft Board—out of the skillet into the fire!

My writings? Well, my first stories I told to my mules, back on the farm. Those were by far the best stories I've ever done. Since, I've succeeded in selling about fifteen stories to magazines that couldn't do any better.

I'm married, and have a three-year-old daughter; when shown a picture of me, and asked who it was, she insisted that it was only "a man." When she saw a magazine picture of Clark Gable in a love-scene with Hedy Lamarr, she began shouting wildly, "Daddy—Daddy—Daddy!"

Readers' Comment*

All This and Cartoons Too?

IF I were to write you and let you know that I got a big kick out of the mule story in the November BLUE BOOK, learned some lessons from Fray Luis that will perhaps stay with me for the rest of my life, took a real liking for "what a guy" Big Jim Turner, and was happy that Len and Marya got hooked up, and had a little bambino, it would probably be just about what 95%, at least, of the readers might tell you.

But—when I say that to my mind, a half-dozen snappy cartoons, spread out through the magazine, would be a worth-while improvement, I must admit it may be just one man's opinion.

D. B.

He Tripped Over a Gun

BLUE BOOK was not far into volume three when we two youngsters were introduced. Since then, I have missed but a very few of the delightful monthly meetings and always with regret. No periodical I know has consistently maintained so high a standard of reader appeal and so richly varied a fiction content, for so long a time.

I preferred the old format. It slipped snugly into a coat pocket and stayed there, no matter how carelessly the coat was flung about, and it could be held upright and open, in one hand.

Perhaps you will forgive this one little carp! When, if ever, will writers for men learn that an automatic pistol, be it Luger, Colt or any other make, is not a revolver. (See, "Will It Happen," November issue, Page 21.)

However, although you let me trip over a miscalled gun, I shall continue to read BLUE BOOK, for the never-failing enjoyment it affords.

Robert M. Shurtz.

Tired of War

AFTER thirty years of adventuring in my own back yard, I now bang my way around the world in BLUE BOOK's many lands, and believe me, many of those stories could and did happen to me. But I'm awful tired of war in any form, so lets put the three tough Sergeants into civilian clothes; they want a change as well as we do.

"Army Mule" by Fairfax Downey is an exception, in that it reminds me of the colorful life of the early settlers. Hoping to spend many more pleasant evenings with BLUE BOOK.

Larry Homant.

BLUE BOOK

February, 1946

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Except for articles and stories of Real Experience, all stories and novels printed herein are fiction and are intended as such. They do not refer to real characters or to actual events. If the name of any living person is used, it is a coincidence.

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At Two Eight



*Illustrated by
John Fulton*

AMOS SMITH sat on the edge of his bed. He struck a light and looked at the clock. It was eight minutes after two. Amos smiled. He was pleased; he whistled a part of a tune he'd heard somewhere when he was a boy.

His getting up had disturbed his wife. She asked him what was the matter.

Amos hesitated. He seemed puzzled, and then he said:

"I don't know."

Mrs. Smith was often annoyed at the things Amos did; and she was annoyed now.

"But," she said, "why did you get up?"

Amos rubbed his chin, and considered.

"It was a kind of peculiar thing," he said. "I thought something had happened."

His wife sniffed.

"You're always hearing noises," she said impatiently.

"This wasn't a noise," Amos told her. "I couldn't give a name to it;

A timely and deeply moving story by the distinguished author of "Drums in the Dawn,"
"Steps Going Down," "Hauling West" and other famous novels and plays.

by JOHN T. MCINTYRE



*"Maybe you do see something, you ape!" she said.
"It's John K. Alcohol," said the man. "He's the
only guy that can make you see things that aint."*

but I think it was something important."

"You looked at the clock; and then you began to whistle."

"I know. Somehow or other I wanted to make sure it was eight minutes after two. And when I saw it was, I felt kind of glad."

Mrs. Smith stared at him.

"Well, of all things! Amos Smith, you're the oddest person I've ever known. What would there be about eight minutes after two that would make anyone whistle?"

"I don't know," said Amos slowly, "but it did."

It was that same morning, in a great steel mill near Birmingham, in Alabama.

The place was filled with deep gloom and alternate blazes of light. Nevins, his bare body smuttied, and running with sweat, watched the huge carrier as it moved forward filled with molten metal. He noted the dripping of red, searing particles from the edge of it; and at the same instant saw young Davis standing motionless in its way. Nevins shouted. The boy did not seem to hear; then the man leaped at him and dragged him back.

"What's the matter with you?" stormed Nevins. "You stood there, asleep on your feet!"

Davis looked at him, his face calm, his eyes full of surprise.

"I was all right," he said. "I was trying to remember something."

"The thing you ought to remember is that you've got a life to take care of," growled Nevins, as he wiped the sweat and grime from his body and looked at the youth scornfully.

"I was trying to get something back into my mind," said Davis. "It was slipping away, and I didn't want to lose it."

Nevins' scorn was now more bitter than before. He said:

"Here you are with a job to do. But you forget that. You stand there trying to remember something that may be happened months ago!"

"Oh, no," said Davis. "It happened just now. Only a few seconds before you took hold of me. When you touched me, I still remembered some of it. But"—regretfully—"now it's gone."

"I can see," said Nevins, "this is no place for you. You're one of the kind that must have the night to sleep in. If I were you, I'd get a job that can be done by day. Here it is, only ten minutes after two, and you—"

But Davis interrupted him.

"I'm glad you said that. For the thing I've been trying to remember happened at eight minutes after two. Just two minutes ago. I remember that, because there were so many people, and they were all talking about it."

"What was there at eight minutes after two?" asked Nevins.

But Davis shook his head.

"That's what I can't remember," he said.



"But Mommy, there are so many—all the frightened people in the world. And they want us."

THIS was the same night; this time it was in the Walewskis' flat in Detroit.

Mrs. Walewski was awakened by her small daughter Anna, calling her from the next room.

"Hush, Anna," said Mrs. Walewski. "You've wakened your father."

"I want to get up," said Anna. "I want to hear the singing."

"There is no singing," said Mrs. Walewski.

"Oh, yes, Mommy, there is! And the people are dancing."

"What is she talking?" Walewski wanted to know. "What is she saying?"

"Anna has a nightmare," said Mrs. Walewski. "She often gets them." The woman arose and went into the child's room. "Anna—Anna, hush," she said.

"We must hurry!" said the child. "We must get dressed and go."

"Anna," said Mrs. Walewski, "don't talk simple! Should we get dressed and go some place at two o'clock in the morning?"

"But I want to see them. I want to hear what they say."

"You are a big girl," said Mrs. Walewski. "You are too old to be foolish."

"There was music," said Anna. "I heard it. And there were hundreds and hundreds of children."

"Keep quiet!" directed Walewski from the other room. "It is night. Go to sleep."

"Hush, Anna!" whispered the mother. "Your father works so hard. He must have rest."

"But Mommy, people will always have rest now. No one will ever be afraid."

Mrs. Walewski held her small daughter in her arms a moment, then put her down gently. "Anna, you must be quiet. It is all dreams."

"But Mommy, it's real! There are so many there. All the frightened people in the world. And they want us. Everyone should go."

"Anna, your bed is warm. Sleep."

"I'll come in there to her if she don't," threatened Walewski.

"Hush, Anna!" whispered the mother. "Your father is so tired. Do not talk. Sleep in your nice bed. Sleep, and do not dream."

CHICAGO: in the Hospital of the Little Company of Mary, a young woman lay dying.

A young interne, almost a boy, was asking in a hushed voice of the nurse:

"How has she been resting?"

"She had a great deal of pain. But it seems to have passed."

"She'll die at any moment," said the young doctor.

"I thought she was going when I called you. She'd been very still. I could feel no pulse. She didn't seem to breathe. But later, she stirred and opened her eyes. She spoke to me."

"Life persists," said the interne, awe in his voice. "It seems so reluctant to pass."

"There was something odd about what she said. That bell in the tower in the next street had just struck two, and I think that's what aroused her. She asked me what time it was. I told her it was two o'clock. She said she'd not die just now—that there was still a little time for her to live."

The young doctor went to the bedside. The woman lay very still, and with closed eyes. He took her pulse; the life-stream was faint; he was indoubt that it moved at all. But she spoke to him.

"Doctor—"

"Yes." He bent over her.

"My baby is dead?"

"Yes," he said gently.

"I will die too. But not yet."

There was a pause, and then again the whispering voice asked: "What is the time?"

"It is after two."

"Much after?"

"Five minutes."

"I have three more minutes of life," she said. He did not know what to say to this; and he stood in silence. "It is a wonderful thing, and strange," she whispered. "No one can die just now. For a great thing is to happen: One will be born who is to save the world from this dreadful new fear that has come upon us."

Again there was a silence, and then the whispering was resumed: "It was not meant that it should be my child. It was born too soon. And now it is dead." The pale hands stirred. "God is strange. His ways are beyond our understanding."

Time passed—slowly. The interne, as he waited, felt that he was not functioning clearly. But the nurse was older; she had long experience. Often and often she'd seen death approach and quietly quench the feeble remnants of life. And now she saw it once again. She reached for the case record, looked at her wrist-watch and set down the final time.

"What was the time?" asked the doctor.

"Eight minutes after two," the nurse replied. . . .

THIS is a place just outside South Chicago. A frame building, within a few minutes' walk of one of the great steel mills. A cross is fastened to the roof; there are some small windows with panes of colored glass. The mills ran night and day and the workmen had been encouraged to visit the chapel between "heats."

In this early morning the old priest, Peter Zeltnik, entered the building. There was a humble altar, narrow and unadorned. Before this a small ruby light was burning; and a young priest, only lately ordained, was kneeling in the semi-dark, his head bowed, his hands clasped. And Father Peter said to him:

"Stephen, why are you here at this hour?" There was no reply. Old Zeltnik went nearer and touched the young man on the shoulder. At once the bowed head lifted; the young priest arose.

"Father Peter!" he said. "I am glad you are here."

The old man studied him in the faint light.

"What is it?" he asked. "What has happened?"

"I have been greatly troubled," said Stephen. "I prayed for enlightenment, but none came. I left my bed and walked the streets. My mind was full of expectations of things I could not give a name to."

"I felt something was about to happen. The feeling was strange and tenacious; I couldn't shake it off; my spirit was stirred in a way I'd never experienced before."

"Was it sadness?"

"No. It was an exaltation. I questioned myself, but could find no reason for it in anything I'd seen, or heard, or done. Then I questioned the time; but it was not a day on which any great thing had happened in the past. It was a thing belonging to the future; it was as though a new and terrible force had come into the world."

"There seemed to be many people; many, many of them. So many that I was frightened. People who had been stunned had suddenly awakened and were hurrying along many ways. Hurrying with songs and glad words on their lips. They were hurrying toward a place where something was to occur."

"As I knelt there, I had a feeling of wonderful space. It was as though the world had drifted into a beam of light thrown by some strange star. And I was startled and afraid."

"To be afraid, my son, is wrong," said Peter Zeltnik. "There are times, I think, when God's hands are held out over the world—and very near. And highly sensitized people are aware of it. You are one of those, Stephen; I have always known it."

And, it may be, in the small hours of this new morning, a light is being kindled. Let your mind be at rest; tomorrow, in a year, or a score of years, you may know the meaning of it. And, again, you may never know. But it has a meaning. A tumult such as you have been experiencing does not arise in a man's soul without a reason."

AND this is a bar in a not-too-respectable drinking-place in Gary, Indiana. The barkeeper stands with his head resting in his hands, his elbows on the bar. The hour is late; the bar clock indicates that the hour of two has passed. There are only two patrons in the place; they sit at the far end, glasses and a bottle between them. And all about them is the stink of gin and cigarettes.

The woman is sullen and wheedling by turns; the man has a thin, dark face. He is drunk, but not enough to take the habitual mockery out of his eye.

"I want to know what Rollie's doing," said the woman. "Just give one show. That's not asking much, is it?"

"I've been giving shows all night," said the man. "And just now I don't care if I never give another one." The mocking eyes were fixed upon the woman; he wiped his grinning mouth with the back of his hand. "And what you want it for, I don't know. I've told you a hundred times the thing's a fake. I don't see anything. I've never seen anything. It's just a gag to take money from simple-minded people."

"I want to know about Rollie," said the woman stubbornly; "you don't want to tell me—that's what's the matter with you."

"Well, all right," said the man, "if you must be a sap, I guess I've got to let you be one." He took a crystal from his pocket and placed it before him on the bar. "O.K.," he said to it. "Start shining, sweetheart." He grinned derisively at the woman. "Now it'll begin to show me pretty pictures."

At the appearance of the crystal, she had become interested; but it was an interest that had in it a mixture of doubt.

"I'm afraid you're too drunk to really see anything," she said.

"I never see anything," he told her. "Aint I said that to you often enough? Aint I said crystal-gazing is only a small-change racket? But you got to hear about Rollie. You're always worrying about him. But let me tell you: he don't worry much about you."

He bent over the crystal, chuckling drunkenly. But almost at once the chuckling stopped. His face was blank for an instant, and then twisted into a laugh.

"Holy Hannah!" he said. "The booze they sell in this place must have an edge on it."

"What's the matter?"

"It's put me in the sap class," he said. "Right in among the boys and gals who believe things can be seen in pieces of glass."

The woman leaned toward him; she stared into the crystal.

"Maybe you do see something, you ape!" she said. "Don't laugh; look!"

"It's old John K. Alcohol," said the man. "He's the only guy that can make you see things that aint." He looked into the glass ball once more, wiping his mouth, and shaking his head in drunken enjoyment. "There it is again!" he said. "The same place. Cripes! That's funny; I've never been drunk this way before."

"I want to know about Rollie," said the woman. "Tell me."

"It's a street," he said. "A narrow, dirty little street. Maybe in Boston. Maybe in Topeka. Maybe in Coshoc-ton. And, listen," in drunken glee, "there's a whole world full of people in it. Millions and millions of them!" He looked at her, his thin face crooked with his laughing. "Aint that being drunk! Millions of people in one street."

"And they're all looking at a house. A shabby little house with dirty white stone steps, and a broken transom over the door. And they're singing. Some of them are talking. I can hear them." His voice cracked. He choked and coughed. He shook with derisive mirth. "Can you beat it? I don't only see, I hear."

"They're all people who've been shoved around a good bit; they're from places where torpedoes and bombs have fallen on them out of the sky. All kinds of people from all kinds of countries. And they're holding a kind of a meeting in this little street. Millions of them, mind you! Singing and laughing and talking."

"Is Rollie there? Do you see him?" asked the woman.

The man laughed and coughed.

"God, I must be drunk!" he said. "I must be stinko! They're talking about a child being born in that house: A boy. And in his brain, so they say, there's a germ that'll one day be an idea." He grinned at the woman. "Did you ever hear me pulling this stuff before? You never did, because I've never been drunk this way before."

"What these people are talking and laughing and singing about is something that's going to happen years from now. Now, get this, because it's the top of the whole thing: This boy, when he grows up, will be the discoverer of the thing that'll tear the atom bomb out of the sky!"

BOY *in a* HURRY

WILLY BOULDER dropped his basket in a corner and tore off his soiled white apron. He was in a hurry. Mr. Atkin gave him a dirty look, but nothing could dim the edge of his excitement on this day. He ran out of the back door of the grocery and kept right on dog-trotting down to the boarding-house.

He went upstairs and got out the box and opened it and looked at the silk trunks and shivered a little. He faced the wavy mirror over his bureau and struck a pose, left hand out, right cocked on his chest. He weaved a bit, ducked, threw a hook at his image, grinning.

He had a square face, with nice, regular features, but only his white, even teeth were noticeable. He was seventeen, although he gravely lied to everyone about that. It was necessary for him to be a year older, and in these times an orphan boy had to hustle all the time to just keep even. If it wasn't for Miss Sue—

He crammed the tights and a worn pair of soft shoes and some sox and a supporter into a small bag and rushed out of his room and down the hall. He rapped on a door impatiently until it was opened. He stuck his head into the room and said: "I aint gonna eat nothin' here in this crummy joint. I'm gonna grab a milk-an'-samwich—"

The young woman said: "Slow down, Willy. Take it easy. You're always in such a hurry."

Willy said: "That Democrat fella, Roosevelt, is runnin' hard for President, and I'm runnin' just to keep alive."

Sue Faye said: "You don't go on until eight-thirty. Now, take it easy or you'll rush into Buster Dane's right hand and get kayoed before you know it."

Willy surveyed her. She was old, he thought—maybe nearly thirty; and she worked for the Midburg *Star* and lived alone and never had dates with men—even old men. But she looked pretty that night in July, 1932. She had on a sort of blouse, loose, filmy, and a skirt with pleats, and she sure had nice legs. He said: "You're dyked out for fight night. You look good, Miss Sue."

She said: "Okay, brat, I look good. Dammit, will you watch your language and pronunciation? And don't talk so fast!"

"That's the ol' gal," he said approvingly. "Look, it aint fightin' Buster Dale's got me e'sited. Remember what you promised me! You really know him, doncha?"

She said: "Pat Hafey? Oh, yes, I know him. Indeed I do, Willy."

"You're always kiddin'," Willy said. "I betcha don't know him good. . . . Didja know him when he fought Benny Leonard, in 1922, in Topeka, ten rounds to a draw?"

She said: "No, but I knew him when he fought Rocky Kansas, in Buffalo, ten rounds to a draw, 1926."

Willy sighed. He said: "Pat Hafey! Never beat by a champeen. Leonard, Goodrich, Kansas, Canzoneri twicet, an' he never lost oncet!"

Miss Sue said dryly: "And he never beat one of them, either. . . . Go along, Willy. I'll see you in the dressing-rooms after the main go and introduce you to Pat—the bum!"

"He's no bum!" Willy cried. "He's terrific. He's a boxer, the best! Even Leonard wasn't no better!"

"I'm going to send you to school and rid you of those double negatives if it's the last thing I do," she said. "Now git!"

He made a face at her and ran down the hall, out of the house and onto the main street of Midburg. The capitol city of Midstate was a bustling, busy town. Of course right now there was a lag in the speed of things. Business had picked up a little since the crash, and prosperity was just around the corner, Mr. Hoover said; but money was tight—there was no denying that.

Willy was very confident, however, hurrying toward the corner dog-wagon where his pal Happy worked. This was his fifth fight as a pro, and even Caspar had to pay him ten bucks per round; the Commission said so. It was only four rounds, but there was local interest in this one. Willy was getting some place, he thought. Twelve bucks a week and tips for delivering groceries, an average of ten per week for fighting, and he could get by until things broke.

Happy—freckled, gangling, tough—poured milk and toasted thin slices of bread. He said:

"Buster was in. Says he's gonna kayo you in the first."

Willy munched the toast slowly and sipped the milk. "Buster is bigger an' stronger'n me. But he can't box."

"You can't hit," said Happy dismally. "I'm your pal an' all that, Willy, but you can't hit a lick, an' you know it."

Willy nodded. "Uh-huh. What of it? Kin Pat Hafey knock out anybody with a punch?"

"You never knocked out anybody a-tall," Happy said.

"Nobody is tagging me with no rights, neither," said Willy, breaking all running negative records for the evening. "I gotta go now. Wish ya could see Hafey lick Chig Dolan t'night."

Happy said wonderingly: "Buster is plannin' on moiderin' you—an' all ya talk about is Pat Hafey, Pat Hafey, Pat Hafey!"

"He is my idealism," said Willy with dignity, and left the dog-wagon. He cut across town, took a bus and got out at the ball park. It was seven o'clock. He had an hour and a half before entering the ring for the first preliminary, but he could not stay away from the dressing-room under the stands. He loved every moment of it, from the smell of wintergreen to the empty, still vibrating time when everyone else was gone home and he was helping the watchman close up.

There were a few people there, of course—the park crew, the boss usher, some front-office men—because this was a big fight. Pat Hafey was somebody in the lightweight ranks; and Chig Dolan, a local boy, was thought to be a comer. Lou Farese was handling Chig, and Lou was in with the mains. Lou was, Willy knew, also in with some bootleggers and racketeers on the side.

CHIG was a tough boy, having trouble already making the lightweight limit. But he was green compared with Pat, and he had flat feet. Hafey would trim his whiskers, all right. Hafey had drawn with Leonard, and only last year with Canzoneri.

Willy went in past the gateman, waving his bag and grinning. The gateman, an old codger, said: "Good luck, young Boulder."

Lots of people knew Willy. He was surprised when they spoke to him, but it was true. His fighting had been successful in attracting their attention, even though he was still a first prelim boy. He had style, of course.

The first of a new series

by JOEL
REEVE

He knew he had style, because his father had taught him, and his father had been amateur champ. . . . He preferred not to think of Pop, nor of Mom, or the way they had died—one following the other—in the City Hospital. Pop had been a great boxer, but no hand for making enough money to last through an illness of five years' duration. . . .

He went into the dressing-room. Two men wheeled and stared at him. One was Lou Farese, small and dark and dapper. The other was big, well-dressed George Miner. Willy stared, seeing these two together, the man who owned the ball park and the fight-manager-racketeer.

Farese said: "Oh, it's Boulder. Run along, Boulder; we're gabbin' business."

Willy said: "I'll just put down my bag, see?" He left it in a corner alongside the row of steel lockers the ball-club used, and went back out. He loafed under the grandstand, watching some early arrivals. He wondered if Miss Sue would see Pat Hafey before the bouts. It was sure funny how Miss Sue knew Hafey and was so interested in boxing and everything—a woman like that.

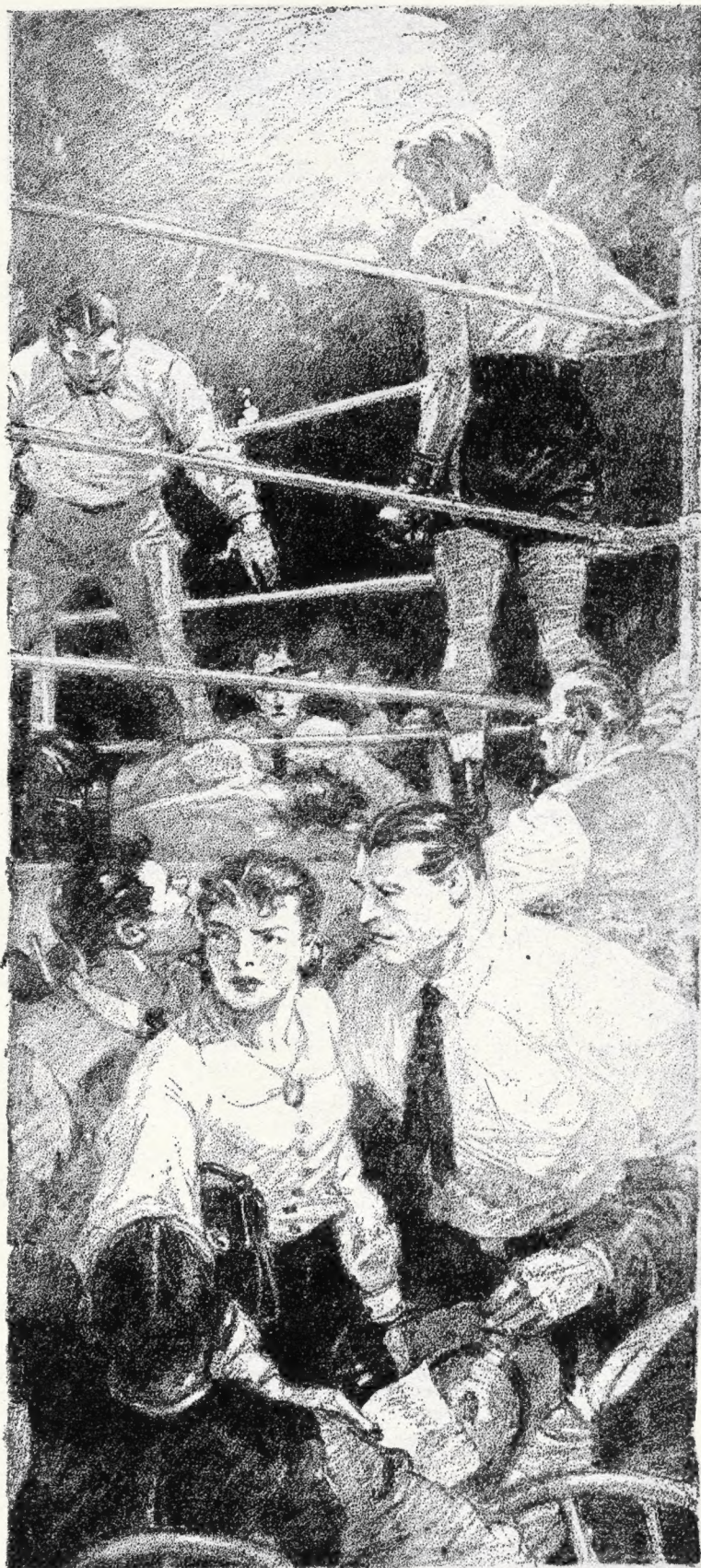
A man drifted through the pass gate, a lean man with a light-colored snap-brim featherweight felt, a double-breasted mohair suit and two-toned sport shoes. He was alone, and he just seemed to be wandering aimlessly. He espied Willy against a post and said: "Hiya, kid? Where's the dressing-rooms?" He had a soft voice, almost a whisper. One ear was bent over a bit, and swollen. His mouth was pleasant and smiling, and over his eyes nature had built a little shelf of cartilage.

Willy said, "Uh—uh—Mr. Hafey!"

"Sure, kid," said Pat Hafey absently. "That the runway to the dressing-rooms?"

Willy said: "Uh—yes, Mr. Hafey!" Then he just stood, goggle-eyed, while his hero went ambling up the runway and into the dressing-room he had just quitted. He thought exultantly that Miner and Farese wouldn't dare throw Hafey out because they couldn't talk business in Miner's own private office over yonder. Huh, Pat would tell them off. He didn't have to put up with that stuff!

A moment later Sue Faye came hurrying through the gate. She saw Wil-



Woods was very grave. He said: "If it's a double-cross—"

ly and said sharply: "Have you seen Pat?"

"In the dressin'-room," Willy said boredly. "I tol' him where—"

He stood, blinking. Sue shouldn't go up there, he thought. That was no place for a woman, even a grown one.

But she never made it. Hafey came out and closed the door and stood with his back against it, looking at her. She said something to him, sharply, and he shook his head, just looking at her as if he was hungry. Willy couldn't quite understand it; but in that moment he was aware that Pat Hafey and Sue Faye were very well acquainted indeed. Like—like they were related or something.

THEN Sue was coming down the runway; her eyes were wide and staring and looked like they did that time she had been to a murder scene for the paper, a bad murder. Hafey was beside her, but she did not take any notice until she was opposite Willy.

Then she stopped abruptly and said: "This is Willy Boulder. I told you about him this afternoon."

Hafey had slanted eyes, which gave him a quizzical look. He pushed back his hat, and Willy was shocked to see that Hafey's hair, very blond, was thinning in the front. Hafey said: "Hiya, kid! I hear you're quite a comer!"

Willy said: "Aw—I'm just a prelim boy."

Hafey said in all seriousness: "We all were, once. I hear you are fighting a very tough character tonight."

Willy said: "Buster's pretty good."

Hafey said: "You going to kayo him?" He had a way of talking, easy, sort of slang, but in correct English. Like Miss Sue.

Willy said proudly: "I'm more a boxer type. Like you!"

Miss Sue said in a choked sort of voice: "There! You see? The boy is like you, Pat. A slick boxer."

Pat Hafey did not even look at Sue. He said: "Kid, you look powerful for one-thirty. Can you hit good?"

"Mebbe. If I set myself," Willy said dubiously.

Sue said: "Give him advice, Pat. You've fought them all. No champion ever whipped you, Pat. Tell my young friend."

Pat Hafey said through stiff lips: "You have anyone in your corner tonight, Willy?"

"Happy—he's my pal—he's working," said Willy, managing to pronounce the final g, speaking very carefully. "I was goin'—going to ask someone."

Pat said: "I'll work your corner, kid."

Sue said: "That's mighty white of you, Pat. Also it is very colorful.

Good copy, as you always are good copy, Pat."

Hafey said: "Come on, Willy. We'll talk this over." He turned away from Miss Sue without a farewell. Willy hesitated, but the flying skirt disappeared around a corner, and she was running for the press-box entrance. So Willy went in and with his heart pounding strangely, dressed and had his hands bandaged by Pat Hafey.

The announcer smoothed back his patent-leather hair and loved it. For him it meant drama—a first preliminary between local boys, with the main-bout attraction seconding one of the boys. Then Buster Dane's manager made a fuss about it, claiming Pat Hafey had no second's license; and Pat, with a half-smile, averred that he had one, all right, and the announcer went on with his announcing, and the scant early crowd of ringsiders looked bored, but the gallery-gods liked it as well as the announcer and bellowed approval.

Willy was fussed. Not that Hafey said anything to him that excited him. In fact, the great man said very little. He wore his suit trousers and a sweater, and grinned at Willy and winked at Buster Dane, who was five pounds heavier at one-thirty-five, and looked burly and hairy and tough.

"You can tie him in knots, kid," Hafey said.

Willy said: "I'll kayo him for you, Mr. Hafey."

"Sure, sure," said Hafey, looking down at ringside. Miss Sue had come in with Woods, the *Star* sports writer, a handsome young guy who had been an All-America back at Midstate U. Miss Sue looked worried and Woods kept talking to her in a low voice and staring at Willy's corner. There was something screwy going on, Willy thought. You could always tell when older people were conniving at something. Miss Sue seemed angry at Pat Hafey. If they were ganging up on Hafey, Willy was going to get sore.

He went out to ring center; and Artie, the prelim referee, said the same old things. He went back, and Hafey took his robe away and stepped outside the ropes and said only: "Let's see what you've got and what he's got. Then I can advise you." He was serious, and his eyes were sharp now, on Willy. It made Willy feel wonderful, having Hafey in there, working with him. He almost busted with how good it made him feel. He was yanking hard on the upper rope when the bell clanged in his ear.

He wheeled and rushed out. He held his hands high, as Pop had taught him, his left darting out. He had a certain rhythm and smoothness which baffled the other preliminary fighters. It was the beginning of that indefinable thing called "class." He pumped the left into Buster Dane's face.

Buster Dane could take it. He was a butcher boy, a rough, tough product of the Down Neck section, a bully boy of the old school. He was a year or two older than Willy, and his muscles were those of a grown man. He absorbed the lefts patiently. His game was to wait with that big right hand. One opening, and he could sink bigger and better men than Willy.

Willy jabbed, danced, jabbed, working fast. He wanted to show it to Pat Hafey, all of it. He danced in and ducked under a right and threw his own inside Buster's right and got home on the body. It was a good punch, and he elected to stay in close.

Bobbing and weaving, he was in Buster's territory, within reach of Buster's punches. Willy timed it, watching Buster's attempts to slug, timing the rhythm of it, beating the bigger boy every time. He blocked or slipped every blow, and it began to be very easy and his elation rose, and for a moment he was riding the crest of the wave. They had never been able to hit him, to hurt him, and this was fine, beating a tattoo on poor Buster.

He stepped back to avoid a clinch and leveled off with a long jab. He saw an opening. His heels came down, his toes gripped canvas. He threw the longest, hardest right of his short career.

Buster chunked it in there. His big arm undoubled, the fist cocked on his hairy chest shot out like a piston rod. It was a beautiful punch, and it landed square on Willy's jaw.

There was a little resin on the canvas, and Willy's face was in it, and the acrid odor of it was in his nostrils. He kept pushing at something, and for several seconds of the count he did not even know that it was the floor of the ring.

HE never heard the count. He got up only because something deep inside told him it was the thing he had to do. He got up and put up his hands and tried to jig a little.

A rushing flurry of leather smothered him. He opened his mouth to gasp for air, and the mouthpiece fell on the canvas and rolled in a little half-circle and the referee threw it to the corner. Willy tried to run. There was blood on his face now, and Buster was calling his shots, but very anxious. Dimly, Willy sensed that Buster was anxious. He fell in close, trying to tie up Buster's strong arms. Hours passed, and he was dripping blood.

Then the referee had him by the arm and was leading him to his corner, and the crowd was shouting and laughing a little. It was only a four-round prelim—it did not matter to anyone. Someone said: "The flashy boy can take it, anyway. Most of 'em can't." That was Woods, and Miss

Sue was telling him off, Willy knew somehow. Miss Sue wouldn't stand for that kind of talk about Willy.

Deft hands were fixing his face. Pat Hafey was not rubbing him nor beating on his legs nor shrieking in his ear. He was just patching the cut over Willy's eye and talking in an ordinary, conversational tone. "That

eager again. He heard Art counting. . . .

He could not understand it. He turned over on his hands and knees. He was strangely beyond hurt. He felt all right, only weak. He got up at nine. . . .

Buster came. This time Willy was not so fresh. He went down again,



was his round. You sucker'd yourself, kid. Now go back and box him. He holds his left too low. Remember that. He holds his left too low. You know what that means."

Willy said: "Yeah, I know."

Hafey said: "Don't talk. Just relax. You're all right. He missed you plenty."

Willy said: "Okay, Mr. Hafey."

The bell rang, and he wasn't all right. He went out, and Buster was holding his left too low, all right. He got over it and jabbed. He jabbed and jabbed. He was still dazed, but he knew enough to jab. He began to feel numb from left fist to elbow, but he saw Buster's eye close completely, which is all he remembered of that round.

He never remembered the third, either, except as a blur. It was the middle of the fourth when he awoke. Hafey had kept him boxing. He had won every moment of every round, and Buster's eye was a mess. Coming back from the knockdown, he was on

his way to victory again. He sensed it in Buster's discouraged, dogged, plodding gait.

He looked at Hafey, who was crouched down at the apron of the ring, his face calm. Hafey nodded and jabbed the air with his left. It was a cinch, despite the bad start. He had only to go through a minute and a half of jabbing.

Exultance returned to him. He pursued the back-tracking, sullen Buster. He jabbed. Buster tried to block. There was an opening. Willy shifted, slung his right as hard as he knew how.

The building fell in upon him. He sat watching the sky, and knew it was not a building at all, because this was outdoors, in the ball park. He saw Buster in a corner, prancing, now

*"Go along, Willy;
I'll introduce you
to Pat—the bum!"*

flat. It took him awhile to get on his knee. He found himself looking straight at Pat Hafey. Warm blood ran down his cheek from the reopened cut. Hafey was counting for him, holding up fingers.

He got up. Buster was strong as a horse. A sweeping, awkward right landed on Willy's chin. He went down again.

He stared at Hafey with bulging eyes. Hafey was puzzled, leaning forward, not counting now, his hands flat on the canvas. Willy managed to grin.

He got up. Buster threw a roundhouse. It landed high, on the side of Willy's head. It knocked him over, but did not hurt him. He took nine.

Hafey kept looking at him kind of funny, with his face drawn and thin, his lips tight. He made a gesture. It seemed to mean stay down for nine, but Willy always knew enough for that.

He got up. Buster, arm-weary from punching him, came in, squaring off. Buster essayed a clumsy left. Willy swayed out of reach. Buster threw an overhead right.

Well, that was something, thought Willy. A sucker punch. Poor, dumb Buster.

He fell inside the overhand right. His own punch started from some place close to the canvas and came driving up. It was all he had left, and he felt it would not be good enough. But it was the thing to do.

He felt it go home and flailed a left hook. It landed, too. Buster was going back, and he looked very sick from the uppercut to the body. Willy braced himself, swaying, trying to get his bearings. Buster, on the ropes, was covering like a turtle.

Willy staggered forward. He pried at Buster's hands with his left. He opened them and chugged a right to the face. Buster rolled on the ropes, came off with a desperate right swing.

Willy could not evade it. He was too tired. He saw it coming and it was another sucker punch, but he could do nothing. It was pretty silly, but he just had to take it.

He wound up on the floor in his own corner. He rolled over and got his feet under him and looked at Hafey and said confidentially and with humor: "Aint we got fun?"

He got up at nine. Buster came lumbering, dog-weary. They fell into a clinch. Willy pumped both hands to the body. If he could get Buster propped up as a target and rest a moment, he felt he might land one more good one. He jabbed. . . .

The bell rang off some place in the distance. The referee was in between him and Buster. He tried to hit Buster with the right, but Art prevented him, which did not seem fair. He protested and Art said: "It's over, you dummy!"

Willy said: "Oh! I'm sorry. I didn't know—" He walked to his corner on widdershins. He leaned on the ropes and looked down at his second and said: "I'm sorry, Mr. Hafey. I got in too much of a hurry, like Miss Sue said."

HAFEY said quietly: "You did all right, kid. . . . The crowd loved it. They're giving you the big mitt right now."

There was a good deal of noise Willy had not heard before. People seemed to be pleased about something. Art was collecting the slips. Willy looked down at Miss Sue and said: "I'm sorry, Miss Sue. I muffed this one."

She heard him. She clenched her hands and mitted him vigorously. Art was in ring center, and the announcer was reading the slips with him. Hafey was mopping Willy with a sponge

which felt very good. In a moment he would have to go over and congratulate Buster. He did not mind that, but Buster would crow over him plenty until they met again, if Caspar would put them on again. . . .

Art said: "The decision is—a draw!"

Willy blinked. He stared at Pat Hafey. He walked out, and Buster met him, and there was a curious respect in Buster's one good eye. Willy said honestly: "I thought you win, Buster."

"I win okay," Buster mumbled. There was blood on his mouth. "I wuz robbed."

"I'll fight you again," Willy offered.

Buster looked slightly horrified and backed off. Willy turned and walked out of the ring, with Hafey holding the ropes apart, and they went to the dressing-room. Willy took a shower and came out, and Hafey was sitting on the table, swinging his legs. His slant eyes stared at Willy. He said: "You kept getting up."

Willy said: "I really lost, huh?"

"He only hit you about four times," said Hafey. "He can sock."

Willy said: "I done wrong, huh?"

"Yeah," said Hafey. "You don't know much. You do a lot of bad things in there. But you keep getting up."

"Well—" said Willy. He felt somewhat embarrassed.

Hafey said: "I'm going into the little dressing-room and lie down. I always take a nap. . . . I wish you had a license and could swing a towel for me."

"I'll be with Miss Sue, in the press row," Willy said eagerly. "Box his ears off, Mr. Hafey. Chig's a hitter, and fast, but he can't beat you. He ketches too many in order to land one."

"Like Buster," Hafey nodded. "I'll see you after the main go, Willy."

Willy was all the way to ringside before the last remark registered. Hafey wanted to see him later—that was funny. Why should a big star like Hafey want to see him?

He crowded in between Sue and Woods, and the reporter said: "You really caught some. You must feel rocky."

"Oh, no," said Willy. "It don't hurt when you're in shape. My head buzzes a little, that's all." He pounded a hard palm on his round skull and grinned at Miss Sue.

She said: "Willy, I love you dearly, but what a chump you are!"

"I know. I wanted to show Hafey," said Willy penitently.

Woods laughed. "You did show him. Ironical, isn't it, Sue?"

Miss Sue said: "Shut up. You don't know anything."

"But I'm a hell of a guesser," said Woods. "Let me see. Hafey is thirty-two. Chig Dolan is twenty-one.

George Miner and Lou Farese have pooled a fortune behind Chig. They are trying to get Canzoneri here, and they need a good win to do it."

"Hafey can beat Chig," said Willy. "I'm tellin' you."

Woods winked at Sue over Willy's head. Sue scowled and bit lipstick off her lip. She sure looked young and good tonight, Willy thought again. The other fights went on and were off.

Woods settled down and said: "We'll see who's right now."

MISS SUE said, without confidence: "You'll see you're mistaken."

"Hafey'll decision him," said Willy blandly. "He tol' me so." Hafey had not told him any such thing, but he wanted to show them he was really on the inside. Hafey had been his second, hadn't he? And it was a harmless lie, because Hafey could easily outbox Chig. Willy had acted as sparing partner for Chig several times. Chig was easy to hit, and loved to attack all the time. He was a tough boy, but was he Benny Leonard, was he Rocky Kansas, was he Tony?

Woods said: "I hear Hafey went broke in '29 and has just got back on his feet. I hear there is really heavy dough bet on Dolan."

Miss Sue said: "Shut up, Woodsy!"

"I was just preparing our hero-worshiper," said Woods.

Willy said: "Now wait, Woodsy. I'm no dumbbell. Are you hintin' that Hafey is going in the tank—that he bet on Dolan?"

Miss Sue said hastily: "Woodsy thinks he is Westbrook Pegler and *Sherlock Holmes* rolled into one."

Willy had to look up to the tall, husky reporter's face. Woods weighed about two-ten in good shape. Willy said to him, quite deliberately: "After the fight, after Hafey knocks off Chig's damn' ears, I am gonna bust you right in the nose!"

"Okay, kid," said Woods good-naturedly.

"You remember that," said Willy.

"Okay," said Woods with equal solemnity.

Miss Sue said: "They're coming in." She was trembling a little, and Willy reached out and took her hand to keep it from shaking so, and she clung tightly to him and did not let go all during the fight. That was what made Willy know she was scared.

During the introductions and what-not, he knew her fear, and as Pat Hafey was introduced, squinting in the lights, waving to the applause he remembered something else.

He remembered Miner and Farese in the dressing-room. Had they been waiting for someone when Willy barged in? Had they been waiting for Pat, early, before anyone came down to the dressing-room? Pat had gone in, and then he had come out

and Sue had been excited about something.

He stared at Sue's flushed cheeks, her too-bright eyes. She never took her gaze from Pat Hafey. But he did not look down at her. He shed his robe and let them fasten the red gloves to his hands and just looked at the floor.

Chig Dolan could scarcely sit still. He was all wires and sliding, smooth muscle. He was a fighting machine, a good boy, and he had the temperament, the love of it, and he had speed. Farese was talking in his ear with great volubility, and Chig was scowling and fussing and anxious.

Willy's stomach began to flutter as though a cloud of white moths had been released within him. His jaw set, and his grip on Sue's hand tightened. Farese—Miner—these were men he had heard vague rumors about. The fight game is full of rumors of shady doings, most of them true, he knew.

But Pat Hafey, with his splendid record, his reputation for leveling at all times—he was a two-to-one favorite tonight. The public was backing him strong. If Willy could have afforded it, he would have laid some money himself, although Willy was not then, in 1932, a great better, nor did he ever become one in his heart, being a worker, a craftsman, rather than a sport.

He suddenly remembered the forty dollars in his pocket. Caspar had paid him outside the dressing-room as he went by, in a hurry. Willy took it out. He said: "Just to show you what I mean, Woodsy, put up twenty. Miss Sue will hold it."

Woods said: "No, thanks, kid."

Miss Sue said sharply: "Put your money away."

Willy turned in his seat. Miss Sue clutched at his left hand, but he had the money in his right. His voice rose a little, more than he had meant it to, but he saw a gambler he knew and said: "Forty to twenty on Hafey."

The man said: "Okay, kid. You're on."

Willy passed the money back to another fellow and wiggled for more space, making the husky Woods give way. He looked up at Hafey, and Hafey was looking at him. Hafey didn't look happy. A cold fear began to make itself at home among the winged moths.

THE bell sounded at long last. Miss Sue's grip was like a vise squeezing Willy's strong hand. Chig Dolan came out of his corner on ball-bearings, throwing leather.

Hafey maneuvered, weathering the storm, blocking, sliding, using the ropes, his head erect, frostiness in his glinting sharp eyes, biting the mouthpiece, his swift hands making Chig miss. Willy gasped with delight at

the defensive performance. It was superb. It was glorious the way Hafey handled Chig, making him flounder in his striving anxiousness.

They were in Hafey's corner, and he was dodging a right. He ducked back, his left hand low. A left hook came winging. He could have pegged it on his right and countered, Willy thought agonizedly. The punch went home exactly on the point of Hafey's chin.



The referee was in between him and Buster. He protested, and Art said: "It's over, you dummy!"

The crowd came up as one, and Hafey hit the deck. Willy dragged Miss Sue erect with him. Farese, his black eyes gleaming, was dancing in Chig's corner. Hafey lay curled on his side in the corner, and the referee was tolling with dramatic gestures.

The coldness turned to a lump of ice. Hafey did not stir. That hook—Willy had seen it coming. Woods was yelling: "I knew it! He caught one. I knew it! Farese and Miner—"

Neither Willy nor Miss Sue said anything. They just clung to each other. The referee said, "Eight. . . . Nine. . . ."

Hafey came to his feet as though released from a cannon. All in one motion he bounded erect. His eyes were glassy. His scant blond hair was on end. He looked—he looked old. His face was drawn inward. There was a network of wrinkles, all etched as deep as canals in this moment. Chig came in with his sights set on

the jaw. He threw strong, shrewd, confident punches, measuring each one with coolness.

Hafey's feet did things. He side-stepped, then danced. Hands at his sides, he bobbed his head back and forth. Somchow Chig's blows did not land.

Chig abandoned caution, going against an easy prey. He set himself, hauled back. He laid in the left, a swing. It missed. He threw the right, a fine, straight punch, booming down the alley.

Hafey stepped in. Pivoting with his full weight, he let his own right hand go like a spear. It was a tiny fraction of a second, quicker. It plunked on Chig's button, and Chig was coming in, and all the weight of Chig's attack and all the slender strength of Pat Hafey exploded against the chin of Chig Dolan.

Hafey walked on rubber legs to a neutral corner. He hung himself on

the top rope by his elbows, and his face still was old and weary. He did not look at anyone; and to Willy it seemed that he was looking within himself still, as he had been since he climbed between the ropes.

Chig Dolan lay on his face. His feet drummed the floor, for he was a very game boy, and his subconscious wanted him to arise. The referee said the time-honored: "Eight. . . . Nine. . . . Ten and out!"

It was over. Willy mechanically accepted the sixty dollars. The gambler looked baffled; the stakeholder muttered something. Lou Farese was white and stony-faced, picking up his fighter. Miss Sue did not seem elated. She seemed frightened.

Woods was very grave. He said: "If it's a double-cross—"

Willy said to Miss Sue, "I'm going to the dressing-room. He said he wanted to see me. I'm going."

He ran, very fast. There were knots of people, everyone excited about the sudden ending of the bout. He had to fight his way through and down under the grandstand. They tried to stop him at the runway, but the old watchman slipped him through. He went down to the private room where Hafey had dressed; it was the baseball manager's little room.

HE got in, quickly, when George Miner went in. They tried to stop him, and he saw Farese, still stony-faced. There were two other guys in there, tough guys. Willy knew them, and they jerked their heads for him to get out, but he walked across the room very quickly and got alongside Pat Hafey.

Miner said loudly: "Get out, Farese."

The little racketeer said: "I was just tellin' him what would happen."

Miner was a pink-faced man, a big man. He said: "Not in this park. Not in this town."

Farese said: "You're tellin' me?"

Miner said: "Yes. Get out."

Farese hesitated. Then he motioned to the two hoods, and they went out.

Miner took out a cigar, clipped the end, looked at Hafey. He said: "There's a train at midnight."

Hafey said: "I'll take it."

Miner touched a match to the cigar. Hafey looked older than he had in the ring, up close. Miner said: "It was all you had, wasn't it? Fifty grand."

Hafey said flatly: "You owe me my end of tonight."

Miner shook his head. "You won't get it."

Hafey did not say anything. Willy shifted uneasily. Miner looked absently at him, did a double-take, looked again. He said: "Ah! Boulder!" He shrugged and started for the door. With his hand on the knob



The little racketeer said: "I was just tellin' him what would happen."

he said: "I'm a realist, myself. Better be sure to take that train. I can only hold Farese so long."

Hafey said nothing. The door closed. Willy went over and locked it. He said: "Take your shower, Mr. Hafey."

Hafey took his bath. He seemed half dazed, either from the punch which had laid him low, or because of what had happened since. Willy knew now what had happened; Willy had been around enough to add up things.

Hafey came out and donned his double-breasted suit and pulled his snap-brim hat over his eye. There was a small bruise on his jaw. He

picked up a heavy pigskin bag and said: "So long, kid."

Willy said: "Mr. Hafey—I won twenty tonight."

"I saw you make the bet," Hafey said listlessly. Then he added curiously: "It was a good bet. Dolan can't beat top men yet. If you're on top, you must stay that way. When you quit, you must quit clean." He looked inside himself again. Willy could tell. He said abruptly: "That was my last fight. I had already made up my mind, sitting in my corner. I saw that hook coming and couldn't stop it. I'm through."

Willy said: "I wisht—I wisht—" He stopped.



Miner said: "Not in this park. Not in this town. Get out!"

There was a knocking at the door. Miss Sue cried: "Pat! Oh, Pat!"

Willy unlocked the door. She came in, her eyes wide with fear. She said: "Farese—he'll gun you, Pat!"

"I'm leaving," Pat said. He stepped away from her, careful not to touch her.

Willy said suddenly: "I'm going with him."

MISS SUE seemed to choke. Then she said: "Why—Willy, you used a final g!"

Willy said, "He's broke. I got sixty in my kick, and I got a hundred more in the bank. Miss Sue'll send my stuff. You can handle me, and we'll get a

couple good boys and start a stable, huh, Mr. Hafey. Huh?"

Pat Hafey looked at the pleading eyes of the boy. Then he looked at Sue. When he spoke, his soft voice was very humble. He said: "The kid taught me a lesson. He's sincere. He's a fighter. Can I take him, Sue?"

She said: "I love him, Pat. He's all good. He is my friend."

"Just this last thing," Hafey begged.

"Oh, Pat," she said. "You earned it—in there—tonight. And you'll be back—you and Willy. I've waited so long, Pat."

He dropped the bag and Willy went out quick into the hallway. He was

amazed. Mushiness! Miss Sue was too old for that stuff.

But on the other hand, Pat Hafey was no chicken. It was 1932, and he had fought Leonard in '22. Before that he had fought a lot of men now long since gone. . . .

Willy got his own bag, his sweaty trunks, shoes. . . . He would have to rush home to pack a few things and say a quick good-by to Happy. . . . Wouldn't Atkins be surprised when Happy called the store tomorrow and told them Willy wouldn't be back?

He was going away—to New York, perhaps. He was a fighter now; he had a manager! He waited humbly for the great Pat Hafey.

One against a Thousand

This second story of OSS adventure behind the enemy lines deals with the extraordinary feat of Lt. George M. Hearn in bluffing the eleven hundred Germans in the Italian town of Chioggia into surrendering to him not only themselves but eight batteries of .88 guns.

by Lt. Com. Richard M. Kelly

THE tall well-built chubby-faced young American in dirty Army OD's followed the German officer into the room. Twelve ranking Germans seated around a table eyed him sullenly. It was many miles behind the enemy lines in Italy; in the streets outside, hundreds of heavily armed Germans were milling around. The American's lone companion was a corporal; neither was armed.

"I've come to offer you a chance to surrender before we start an air bombardment and an attack on your garrison!"

The answer to that bold and completely unsupported demand spoken by twenty-seven-year-old 1st Lieutenant George M. Hearn marks one of the most dramatic and successful exploits in the secret files of America's spy agency in World War II—the Office of Strategic Services.

The OSS, which outwitted the Nazi and Jap intelligence services in occupied Europe, Southeast Asia and China, had a peak strength of just two over twenty thousand. The bulk of the personnel were U. S. Army men, and civilians of both the United States and Allied countries. The Navy—including Marine Corps—men also played a large and highly important part.

Hearn's adventure had all started five months before. . . .

On a moonless December night in 1944 an American Air Rescue boat, operating under the British Navy, took off from the big Allied port of Ancona on the Adriatic coast of Italy. Aboard were three mixed British and Italian parties; in command was Lt. Hearn, North Carolina-born ex-California football star and Marine Corps 1st Lieutenant of the Office of Strategic Services. Their dangerous destination was a sandy beach just south of the main mouth of the Po River, about forty miles behind the German lines, which had stiffened for the winter just north of the ancient city of Ravenna.

Hearn's orders were to land these three teams of secret agents. The landing accomplished, he was to return to his headquarters and await developments.

German activity in the area toward which they were heading was severe. Hearn knew that continued terrorism of the local population by Fascist and German troops made the chances of help from the natives very slim; yet he must try to infiltrate these teams, whose job it was to organize an underground movement in this strategically important Po Delta area.

The first mission of Hearn's men was to establish an intelligence network that would report to the British Eighth Army by secret radio on bombing targets and German activity; their second, to organize and arm a group of partisans who could attack the Germans in their rear just before the Allied army was due to reach the area. This technique had already worked with astonishing success in previous advances up the Adriatic coast, with great destruction to the enemy and the consequent saving of hundreds of Allied lives.

For six hours Hearn and his party sailed through the darkness; then with a quick change of course the boat headed toward the dim outline of a beach. Rubber boats dropped over the side, and noiselessly the three parties paddled toward the shore.

They landed on a deserted sandy beach.

Lt. Hearn's first impression of this area which was to play such a large part in his future was not good. The land was completely flat, without trees or cover of any sort, and he knew it would be difficult for his agents to escape observation in such terrain.

As he paddled back to the Air Rescue boat, he was worried for the safety of his men. A few days later his worst fears were realized. Frantic radio messages came from two of the teams who had been landed that night.

They were "being chased" and would attempt an escape in the rubber boats they had with them. Planes and surface vessels were immediately dispatched to search the area; after four days they finally located the two weatherbeaten parties and brought them safely back to headquarters. The report was not encouraging: they had landed in the midst of a "*rastrellimento*," in which the Germans were sweeping the area to clean up any partisans or deserters who might be hiding out in the swamps—a searching round-up which the OSS men had just managed to escape.

FROM the third party came no message at all. The fatal report was brought back to Hearn, after a week of waiting, by refugees from the area. The three men who had made up the third team had sought shelter in a local house, only to be betrayed by a Fascist spy who reported their presence to the enemy.

A German lieutenant and two sergeants had broken into the house to seize them. One of the OSS men was seated at a table facing the door, a lighted candle and his tommy-gun beside him. His two companions were on the far side of the room preparing some food. As the Germans crashed into the room, the man at the table with one motion knocked over the candle and opened up with his tommy-gun at the advancing Germans, simultaneously yelling to his companions to run. This brave action cost the young Italian his life, because in the short vicious exchange of shots he was fatally wounded; but before dying he managed to kill two of the Germans and wound the third. The other two men escaped through the window, but lost all their equipment so that they were unable to make contact with their base.

It was a poor beginning for the penetration of this important Po Delta area; but at the urgent insistence of

the Eighth Army, Lt. Hearn and his OSS unit made new plans to get the underground movement going. . . .

The betrayal of the third team had alerted the Gestapo to Allied interest in the area, and defensive patrols and terroristic activity against the inhabitants were now greatly increased. Due to constant German vigilance, Hearn's next two efforts to land agents in the area were unsuccessful; but finally in February he managed to infiltrate successfully a group of advance organizers.

This was accomplished by using native fishing-boats manned by fishermen who knew the swampy terrain intimately. In a tiny boat hidden

deep in a swamp, the agents set up their secret radio station. One of their first messages was a report that a large launch used by the Fascist Black Brigade to patrol the coast against secret Allied landings had run aground. Within a few hours Allied planes had bombed, strafed and sunk that boat. Exploit followed exploit; so frequent did these tipped-off bombings become that the local Germans fearfully began moving their billets every night. Hearn, back at headquarters, relaxed after two months of worry.

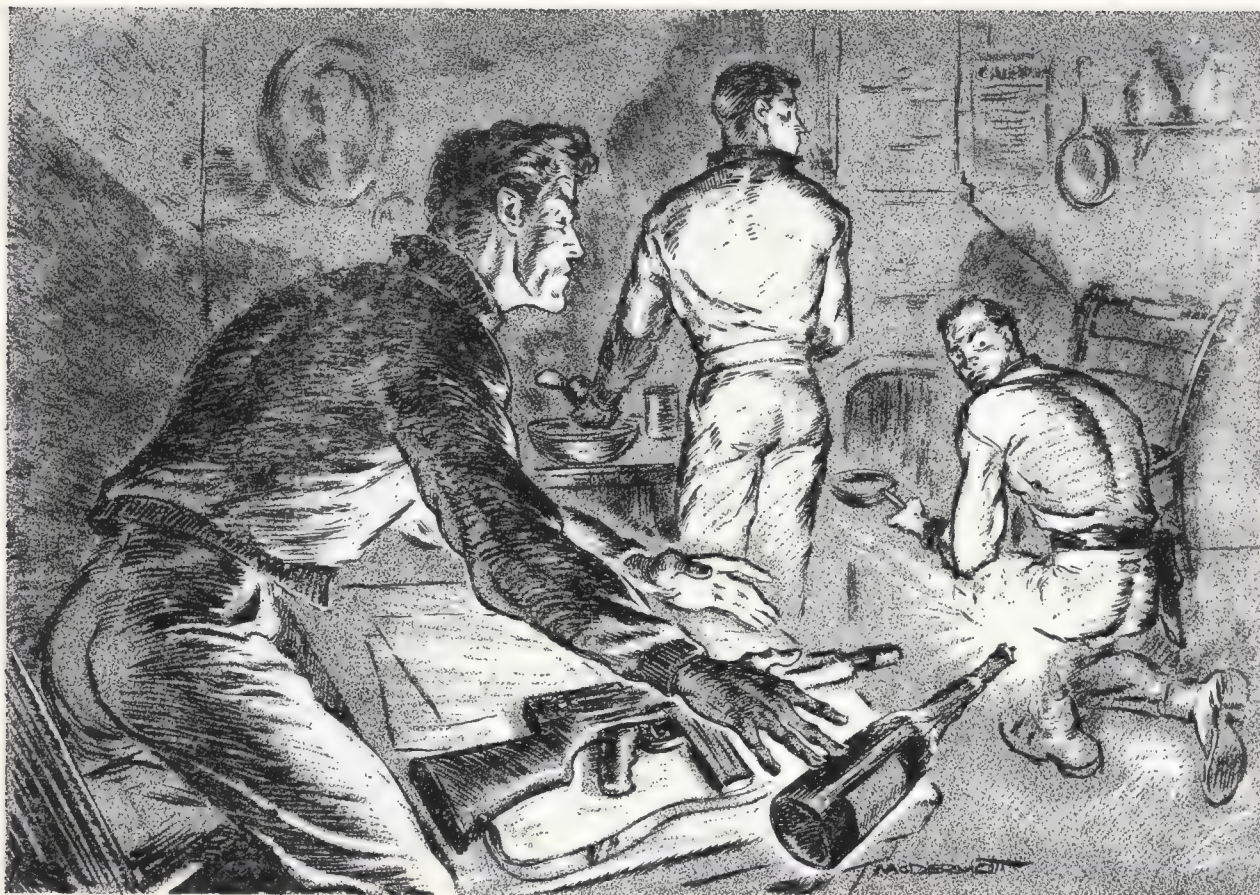
At last the mission was under way. But the terrorism prevailing the whole area increased as the Ger-

mans multiplied their countermeasures in an effort to discover the clandestine organization. One of the fishermen who had originally guided Hearn's men was arrested and taken away for torture and interrogation. Knowing that the captured man was aware of their location, the agents moved the radio secretly to a new hide-out; and one of the men, realizing that their increasing peril made more arms necessary, made his way back to Hearn at headquarters on a stolen smallboat, bringing with him a list of the necessary supplies.

The delivery of these arms was delayed by the frequent Adriatic winter storms, and when it was finally accom-

"Might as well make it good, I thought, and then I let them have it—my wildest idea of all."





plished in March, the whole project came within inches of total disaster: While the arms were being off-loaded and the underground leaders conferring on board, an enemy plane strafed the Air Rescue boat as she lay helplessly anchored two hundred yards offshore. With a cargo of ammunition and over a thousand gallons of gasoline on board, a single shell-hit would have blown everyone into eternity. Fortunately the plane missed, and the operation was successfully accomplished. Three German E boats, evidently summoned by the plane, were spotted as the American boat slipped away undetected for home.

The distribution of these arms quickly increased the partisan strength. It was none too soon, for early in April, General Mark Clark's American Fifth and British Eighth armies were readied for their spring offensive.

HEARN and his superiors were motivated by one constant idea: If these partisans organized in the Po Delta area were to be usefully employed, if all the work and risks of the many trips which had established and armed the organization were to aid the Allied command, they must be ready to strike at the critical moment. Should they strike too soon,

the Germans, with several thousand troops, armored cars and self-propelled guns a few miles inland, and another two or three hundred well-armed soldiers in the area itself, would quickly crush them, and hundreds of defenseless civilians would lose their lives and homes.

They had one haunting thought: This unit must prevent the Germans from flooding the Po Valley in their area. In the previous thousand years, various conquerors and interested rulers had changed the course of Italy's great river to suit their needs. In the year 1600, the Republic of Venice had diverted the Po forty miles northward to its present course. Napoleon had done extensive engineering in the Valley. German flooding and destruction of pumping stations would not only hamper the Allied advance but would ruin Italy's richest food-producing area.

By mid-April the Allied offensive was going well. Bologna had fallen, and the two Allied armies were pressing toward the Po. Another delivery of arms was made, and with it came the final "alert" order from Allied headquarters:

"Arm as many more partisans as possible and prepare to strike when we give the word."

But that word was never sent, for the Germans struck first, with armored cars and light artillery: The partisans were forced to seek refuge in their swampy stronghold.

This action took place just south of the mouth of the main Po, in a region known as the Isola Donzella, because a branch of the Po which entered the Adriatic ten miles farther south of the main exit created an island between the two rivers. This island was bounded on the north for a distance of ten miles by the main Po, on the west for fifteen miles by the southern branch, called Po de Gnocca, and to the south and east by the Adriatic. The only connection with the mainland was by a large steel bridge in the northwest corner.

The partisans planned, with OSS support, to clean up the two hundred Germans on the island, then use it as a base to harass the Germans on the mainland to the north and west. The enemy hoped to neutralize the zone and prevent the Allies from using it as a base in their rear.

THIS was the object of the enemy attack of April 20th, but the dangerous work of the past three months paid off; and in two days of battling, with ambushes playing a decisive part,

A German lieutenant and two sergeants had broken into the house to seize them.

the Germans were forced to retreat from the island. They blew up the bridge behind them to prevent pursuit.

The secret radio flashed news of the partisan achievement to OSS headquarters. Eventual success stood in the balance; and Lt. Hearn volunteered to go behind the lines to join the partisans and exploit the island beachhead. On the morning of the 22nd of April he set off from Ravenna by Chriscraft. He knew that he was about to attempt a spectacular feat—a landing behind enemy lines in broad daylight. But what he didn't know was that he was embarking on a personal adventure that would eliminate an important part of the German army in Italy. His orders, which originated with the Chief of Staff of the Eighth Army, were to exploit the situation and infiltrate additional agents farther north.

HHEARN, as they neared land, found himself crossing his fingers. True, the radio report had said the area was free of Germans, but he realized the enemy might have come back and retaken the island.

The Chriscraft, which had been captured from some German saboteurs several months before, swung sharply into a small stream and slowed down. Smallboats, loaded with armed men, approached. They proved to be partisans. Hearn landed to a turbulent welcome.

The immediate area, it proved, was free of Germans, but a sharp battle was going on across the river in the northeast corner of the island.

Since there was no available transportation—the Germans had removed every automobile and killed all of the horses they had been unable to take with them—Hearn walked the ten miles to the battle area. His first sight of the partisans brought a feeling of relief—at least, his Italian lieutenant, who up until his arrival had been in command, had used his head: He had stationed men with Bren guns and machine-guns along the bank of the main Po to guard his northern flank. As Hearn neared the town of Ca Tiepolo, located at the northeast corner of the island where the two branches of the Po met, gunfire could be heard, interspersed with occasional shells.

Hearn immediately surveyed the situation which was now his command. For soldiers, he had six OSS Italians from the famous San Marco Marines of the Italian Navy, whom he had sent in earlier to help train and arm the underground. Beyond this



tiny force, he had little else of a known military quality. About three hundred Italians had rallied to the cause, but few of them had the slightest conception of military operations—as was proved the night of his arrival, when the Germans counter-attacked under the protection of a heavy barrage.

FOR Hearn, that first night was a nightmare. Amidst the crack of the shells, the chatter of the machine-guns, the crump of mortars and the glowing red flares, he, his San Marco Marines and his one corporal were tiny desperate figures running up and down the wavering front positions of the partisans, trying to encourage them to stand their ground, not to run and flee before the desperate German pressure.

His voice, hoarse in the smoky air, was a thin shout of encouragement all through the night: "Stand and fight! If the Germans get across, they'll burn the town! They'll kill your families. . . . Stand and fight!"

That desperate cry held the key to the courage of the irregulars. They knew only too well what the German had done to those he suspected of taking arms against him. Too many burned houses and tortured corpses

had defaced the countryside to leave any doubt.

Their answer was a sudden strengthening of the lines, a steady return fire, a quick rally. Digging in at Hearn's orders, they took cover and held their ground. The advance was checked—but not before the Germans were once again entrenched on the island about a half-mile deep on the south side of the river.

The morning after the battle, Hearn, his face covered with mud, his eyes bloodshot and weary, sat in his tiny command post to think things out. He was exhilarated by his first combat experience, but sobered by the realization that the enemy threat was great and his resources feeble. Any kind of German attack, and his thinly held defenses would crumble. If that happened, they would have to take to the swamps, and his mission would be a failure.

He drew a crushed cigarette from his pack, lit it, inhaled slowly. Well, the Germans were most interested in countering the threat that his forces offered to their crossing the Po. A major ferry-crossing about seven miles inland was vital to the Hun, now in full retreat from the south. So, this advance across the river of last night was probably meant to give added

protection to that crossing and also to feel out the strength of Hearn's force.

AT Quantico, Virginia, where he had made "expert" in the pistol, rifle, .30-caliber Browning and mortar, Hearn had been taught the standard Marine formula for most situations—"Attack!" In spite of his meager resources, this was the type of action that challenged his Marine training—even though he was well behind the enemy's lines.

With a quick gesture, he rose and ground out the stub of his cigarette under a muddled heel. The Germans still didn't know how weak his forces were; they were principally concerned about the Eighth Army, which was pushing them back to the Po. . . . Attack? He would—he'd give them everything he had!

With fresh men deployed and his nucleus of San Marco Marines distributed among his partisans, Hearn gave the order for attack at eight A.M.

Machine-guns, mortars, rifles and Stens burst into steady fire. Taking a bazooka, Hearn crept forward, using one of the many drainage canals for cover. Closing to within one hundred yards of the foremost German machine-gun, he opened up. After several direct hits, two San Marco men, heedless of the minefield, raced forward to heave grenades. The Ger-

mans abandoned that position, taking their wounded with them and deserting their machine-gun.

Inspired by this success against the first German strongpoint, the partisans pushed forward. Some, forgetting to take cover, were hit by German fire, but with Hearn in the lead, the advance kept up. Ninety minutes later the last Nazi stronghold was reduced.

Twenty prisoners had been taken. The remnants of the enemy pulled back across the river. Hearn had won the support and leadership of the irregulars; from now on, he knew, they would be with him—all the way.

With his possession of the island reestablished and reinforced, Hearn, heartened by this development, decided to send a reconnaissance patrol north across the main Po, where on the previous night the Germans had been mortaring the town in support of their counterattack.

To lead this patrol he selected a veteran San Marco noncom known to all as the "Maresciallo," who took fifteen of the best partisans and started about ten A.M. Six hours later he came back with news that the Germans seemed to have cleared out to the north, and brought with him twenty-five prisoners. He also set up positions to guard the northern flank, and Hearn felt slightly more reassured about the situation and quite pleased with the results of his bold gamble!

The twenty-five prisoners, which brought the total bag up to two hundred for the first three days, presented a problem. Suddenly the full import of his position as senior Allied officer hit the novice commander. He headed for the town jail, found it, as the Italian jailers clamored to tell him, "*Plena, piena!*"—full of the Brigata Nera, the hated Fascist Black Brigades who had been responsible for most of the local atrocities.

These prisoners were sulky and silent; they greeted his approach fearfully—a miserable lot, he thought. Hearn walked down the dim passage-way, followed by the gesturing jailers, turned a corner—and immediately was met by an uproar. Surprised, he looked into the first cell, discovered it jammed with attractive young Italian girls. With a puzzled frown he turned to the jailer for an explanation. Contemptuously, the man spat toward the cell, jabbered the reason for the arrest of these dozen or so *signorini*—all had been mistresses of the Germans, despite the fact that they were now pleading a case of "*amore puro*"—true love—in tearful voices.

HERE was Hearn's solution. He could have the girls released under house arrest and let their neighbors mete out the punishment they deserved. Shaved heads would probably be pretty evident in the town for the next few days, but he would have room for a few more Germans!

That night the Germans kept up a steady machine-gun and mortar fire; but Hearn and his men, active in their forward positions on the riverbank, discouraged any attempt at a Hun recrossing.

The password for that night was "*Venezia.*" Little did Hearn realize that a few nights later he would be sleeping in the royal suite of the world-famous Danieli Hotel of that beautiful city of Venice fifty miles farther north, after one of the most phenomenal occurrences of the Italian war.

"Attack" had certainly paid off—why not try a bolder move? At sunrise the following morning, Hearn was ready with the Maresciallo and about forty of his best men. He planned to take a crack at the ferry, so essential to the enemy in his troop and ammu-

*Illustrated
by John
Mc Dermott*



To lead this patrol he selected a veteran San Marco noncom known to all as the "Maresciallo."

dition movements. Picking their way cautiously across the table-flat country, they headed north, then due west toward the ferry town of Contarina. The numerous canal- and riverbanks afforded their only cover.

By nine o'clock they reached the dirt road that led north from Contarina. In the warm spring sunlight Hearn called to his group to halt, explained to them the plan that he had thought out on the three-hour march. They would ambush German traffic. In the party there were two mortars and two machine-guns, some rifles and Stens. He directed the machine-guns and mortars to be set up so that there would be crossfire on the road. They were seven miles behind the Germans whom they had been battling on the south side of the Po, but Hearn had no idea how far they were behind the main front line. What he was counting on to give him an advantage was the disorganization of the retreating German army. This was an area where partisan activity had been negligible; therefore there was a chance—a slight one, but still a chance—that they could surprise the enemy.

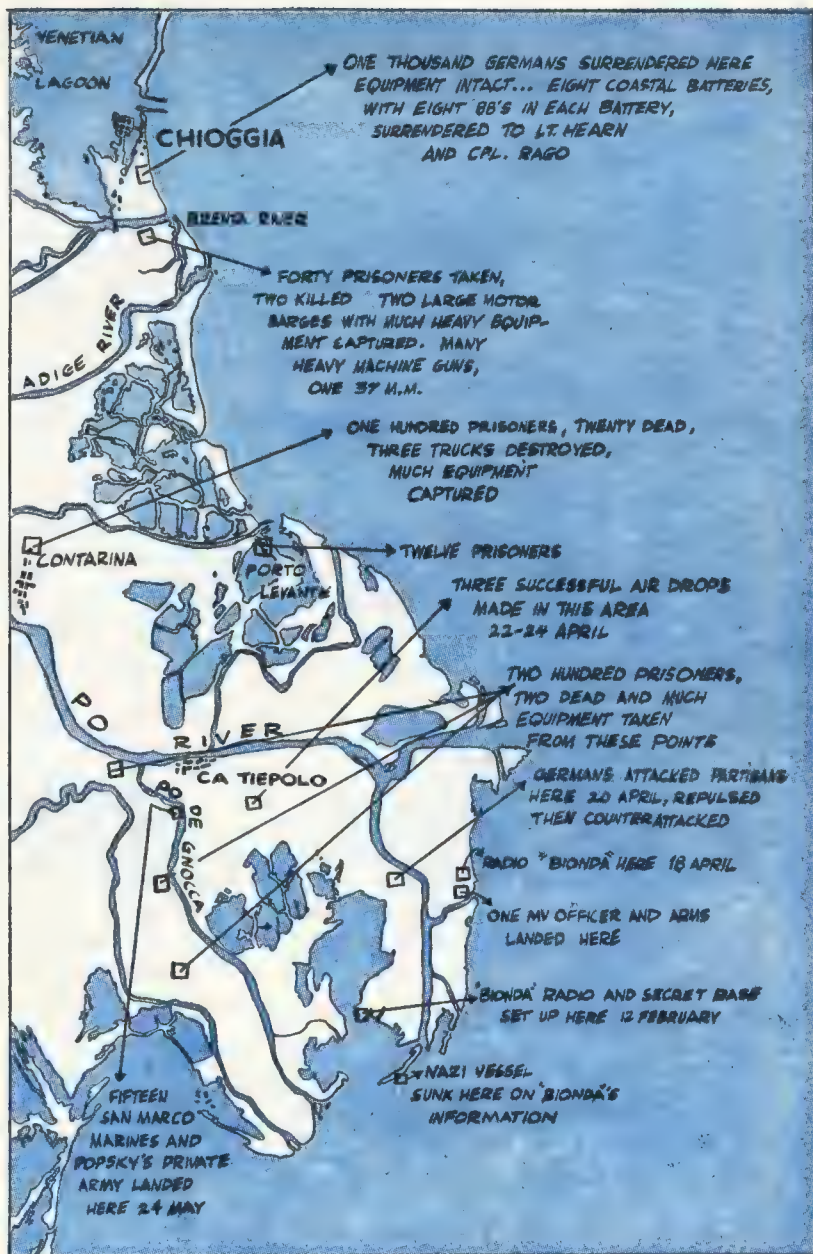
Crouching in the fields, the men waiting silently, guns aimed. Slowly across the spring air came the low rumble of trucks. Louder and louder it grew—and then two crowded vehicles were on the road before them. Hearn's mortar crashed—the signal for general firing.

"We had pretty good luck," grins Hearn. "Damned if my first shell didn't drop right on the motor of that first truck. I figured none of the boys back at H. Q. would ever believe that, but it sure made those Italians think I was good, and they opened up with everything they had on the troops in the rear of the truck." Within a few seconds of firing, arms were raised and the survivors surrendered.

They were ready for the next load of Germans—and within the hour they arrived. A quick crossfire; another surrender—and the readying of ambush positions again. All day long that lone American Marine and his little group of irregulars kept the road under ambush.

"Another break we had," drawls Hearn, "was that the ferry was both small and fairly slow, so that the Germans kept coming in small groups of twelve or fourteen men and two or three trucks. That way we could knock off each group before another lot came along. We were far enough north of the town that no one in the garrison there got wise, because all the troops were heading to a new post farther north."

LATE in the afternoon they took count—over one hundred prisoners, nearly half that many of the enemy killed, half a dozen trucks destroyed.



Anxious for the safety of his main position at Ca Tiepolo, Hearn led his men back quickly. He wondered what the day's news from base would be—they needed ammunition badly if they were to keep up the work. The message had come; an air drop would arrive that night. On the other bank of the river where the Germans were entrenched, all was quiet—they evidently had given up any idea of trying to recross.

The night's silence was broken only by the drone of the incoming planes. In the blazing light of fired piles of hay arranged in a secret pattern, the men worked swiftly dragging the ammunition away. With that job done,

Hearn managed to get a few hours' sleep, his first since he had landed.

In his headquarters the next morning Hearn was briefing his squad leaders when the phone rang urgently—a message for the "commandante." As he listened, Hearn's face broke into a grin—what news this was! This was what he had been hoping for these past few days—they were being joined by Popsky's Private Army. These fabulous fighters, a unit of the British Eighth Army, were a special jeep-borne outfit that carried two machine-guns, one .30, one .50, on each jeep. They had been making life miserable for the Germans by their sudden and terribly destructive raids since the



The Chriscraft swung sharply into a small stream and slowed down. Smallboats loaded with armed men approached.

days of the victorious desert campaign in Africa. Their mission was to exploit Hearn's foothold by sweeping inland and north; their orders for Hearn were to proceed as far north as possible along the sparsely settled coast.

"Popsky's" arrived at ten that morning—some sixty strong, with twenty jeeps. They came in landing-craft, sailing up the Po Gnocca, which Hearn's partisans now controlled on both sides. They brought with them an additional squad of San Marco Marines from the OSS base to reinforce Hearn, and considerable supplies. Two of the landing-craft returned, taking with them some two hundred German prisoners, the bag of Hearn's five-day campaign.

Briefing the English officers on the general situation was Hearn's next important job; after that, he must see that his men were equipped for the push north that would start next day. This attended to, he started on a scouting sortie to the north of the Po, for since both the Eighth and Fifth Armies were now known to be crossing the Po farther inland, no one knew where the next German defense

would be. Heading toward Contarina again, Hearn spent the next three hours looking over the land, talking to the natives and visiting the peasants' farms.

IT was about four in the afternoon when he reached a small cottage on the outskirts of town. As he turned in the gate, he noticed a group of German prisoners standing in the road under guard. More of the same, he thought happily; this was a good place to rest.

Stretching out his legs gratefully, he sipped the wine the farmer's wife had shyly proffered, and sat back to think over the amazing events of the past few days.

Suddenly from outside came the sharp burst of a tommy-gun. Hearn was out the door in a moment. Lying on the ground were two dead German prisoners. The story was a particularly ugly one; he listened to it, knowing that it was but an encore to the thousands of such incidents that had happened in German-occupied land.

The day before, a little twelve-year-old girl had asked these same two re-

treating Germans for sugar. Their answer had been to shoot her, wounding her seriously. Today the child's father had walked up to the group of prisoners, and recognizing the two men, had calmly killed them. This was partisan justice. Hearn had issued strict orders against such acts, but he knew that all the orders he could ever give would never stop incidents of this sort. Wearily he turned back.

Thank God, at least, he thought, that with this new supply of ammo, they would have another chance to take a good crack at this atrocity-perpetrating enemy!

The move north started the next morning. Hearn, with one American corporal, Peter Rago of Staten Island, N. Y., fifteen San Marco Marines and a like number of partisans, crossed the Main Po and headed out over the open flat country. Ahead of him was an unknown number of the enemy.

Fifteen miles north was the Adige River. For months Allied intelligence had detected German efforts to fortify this river, where they had constructed the widely advertised Adige Line. Several miles north of the Adige was the River Brenta, another

natural defense line; and just across the Brenta was the fortress city of Chioggia on the southern end of the Venetian lagoon. Chioggia, a city of thirty-seven thousand, was the hub of the extensive German system of water transportation, and a vitally important port.

HEARN, trudging north with his little detachment, was thinking of an incident that had happened several days before, and just what it might mean to his expedition. A group of young Italians had come ashore on the Isola Donzella during the partisan uprising when their motor boat had run aground. They had told a fantastic story of having stolen the boat in Chioggia harbor from a German officer who had prepared it for a trip to Trieste. They had been able to slip out of the harbor without challenge, they said, because the officer had made all arrangements with the harbor batteries.

The story had sounded thin to Hearn, too thin. Making a quick check with his San Marco men, he was tipped off that the young Italians wore the same type of shoes issued to Italian naval saboteurs. He had then sent them back to the rear, where the British Field Security Service had quickly identified them as German agents. But before leaving, they had told Hearn that Chioggia was full of Germans, and that many naval guns were being set up as additional defenses. This had been the last direct source of information the young Marine had had on Chioggia; and though it was suspect, it still bore out all previous reports. They would probably find it pretty hot up around there, he thought—too hot, maybe, even to spot an agent, which had been one of his original orders.

AS they pushed into "no-man's land," Hearn split his thirty-five men into three squads, each covering a sector of about eight hundred yards. He and his corporal interpreter maintained their command post in the center of the advancing line.

His first stop was a coastal hamlet called Porto Levante, where he heard good news. Local partisans, with arms he had shipped them a few days before, had captured twelve Germans and some stores. So far, so good . . . the next destination was the Adige, and to his amazement there was not a German to be seen. Commandeering two small fishing boats, Hearn pushed across the river, the first Allied troops to cross it in Italy so far as he knew.

Twenty miles behind him—and no opposition! Three more miles to go and they would reach the river Brenta across which lay the outskirts of Chioggia. Should he stop for a bit or

push on? He decided to keep going. At his order the men's steps quickened; they were emboldened by their easy success, eager to get on with the job.

At six in the evening they approached the Brenta. Shots suddenly rang out—the advance scouts had spotted several Germans on the southern bank of the stream and opened fire. These Germans immediately dived down the steep banks to the river's edge and sharply returned the fire. The partisans, off balance from their unopposed push, had got a little careless, and that first German volley was almost fatal. Hearn heard the zing of a bullet at his right, turned to see the young Italian officer who had been standing next to him throw himself flat on the ground. He had received two bullets—one through his cap, another through his jacket; but fortunately had not been touched.

The situation was serious. Hearn quickly ordered his men to take up positions and put a heavy fire on the river bank to keep the Germans down. How many of them there were he didn't know, but he intended to find out.

With half his men, he swung to the right to the seacoast, and sneaking up the beach, set up two Bren guns at the river mouth. They opened up on the Germans from the flank.

Under fire from two sides, and unprotected from Hearn's automatic fire, the German party of forty-five surrendered fifteen minutes later. With them were two large barges loaded with ammunition, weapons, food supplies and a large quantity of liquor. They had been waiting for dusk, when they had intended to slip out the river and head northeast to Trieste.

Some other Germans might be trying the same trick. . . . An ambush was set up to capture any craft heading out to sea. There was another detail to consider, too—and Hearn

made short work of it: His men were entitled to a good belt of cognac, he figured—good Italian cognac at that. On the deck of the blood-bespattered boats, the men gulped the liquor, a macabre touch to a toast of war.

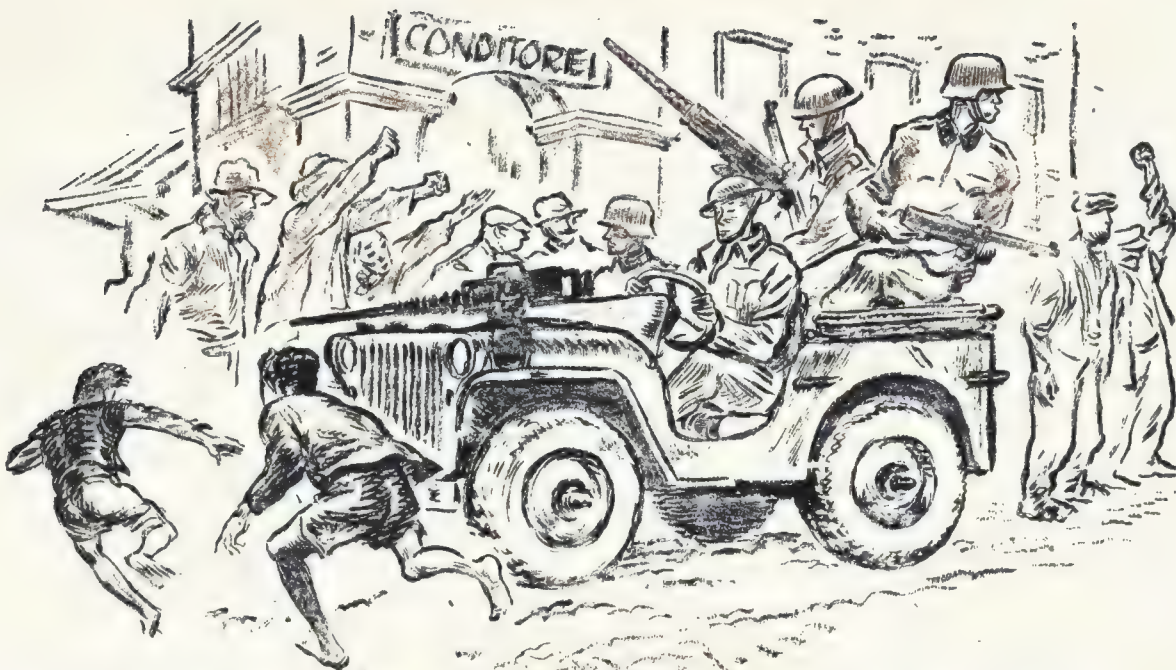
During the night numerous refugees crossed the Brenta, heading south. Interrogating them, Hearn gathered an odd assortment of facts. There were only thirty Germans left in the city; one thousand had pulled out that morning; the thirty wanted to surrender. . . .

This was not the picture he had had of a strongly fortified Chioggia. Still, Hearn reasoned, he had pushed up the coast with hardly any opposition. The enemy could have pulled out of Chioggia. It was possible. Why not grab another thirty Jerries?

IN the misty pre-dawn darkness, at four-thirty A.M., on that morning of April 27th, Hearn was ready to leave. Wearing his Army O.D.'s with an American flag shoulder-patch, he and Corporal Rago crossed the Brenta in a small rowboat and entered the outskirts of Chioggia. Behind them at about two hundred and fifty yards followed two San Marco men with a



"Damned if my first shell didn't drop on the first truck's motor."



One of the strangest scenes of the war. . . . Jeeps patrolled, armed Germans

riding next to British Tommies, and armed Germans marching in the rear.

Bren to cover them. Ahead loomed the German fortifications.

The countryside was still; the road was deserted, the houses by its side quietly asleep. Then in the distance Hearn saw a figure approaching—an Italian fisherman bicycling to the river for his early morning catch. Hearn stopped him and questioned him. The fisherman was eager with his answers—*si, si*, there were Germans in the town—*si, si*, they wanted to surrender. He knew where they were—they were all drunk. Yes, he could find a German who would talk to Hearn—and within twenty minutes he returned with a German sergeant.

CRISPLY Hearn told him he had come to discuss surrender from the Germans.

"I must go and get my officer," came the reply.

"I'll meet him here on the road," agreed Hearn; and the sergeant, after a smart salute, turned and ran toward the city.

Immediately Hearn and his corporal gave their pistols to the two San Marco men, meanwhile ordering them to fall back several hundred yards and lie low. What would happen next he had no idea; he'd taken the step, and now he'd have to face the music, even if the Germans might call the tune.

Within fifteen minutes he sighted three men coming down the road—two German officers with holstered pistols and a German medic with Red

Cross arm-band, carrying a large white flag.

To the tips of their polished boots, the officers were impeccable, their spotless uniforms a sharp contrast to Hearn's muddy shoes, battle-worn uniform and unshaven stubble. A few feet from him, they stopped and saluted. The American officer responded; and then, taking no chances on his own poor Italian, turned to Italian-born Rago, and with a gesture indicated that he should interpret.

He began:

"I am an American officer, and I have come to take your surrender. What is the strength of your unit, and where are they located?"

The Germans eyed his dirty uniform contemptuously, their attitude surly but correct.

"We cannot discuss this with you, but we will take you to our commanding officer."

This was something else again! Hearn and Rago exchanged a swift glance of apprehension—as the OSS Marine officer tells it. "I knew it would certainly be most unusual for only thirty Germans to have two officers, and now this pair had mentioned taking us to still another officer, their C.O.! Further, one of the two was a captain; the other a lieutenant. The Germans frequently had only sergeants in charge of a whole company!

THIRTY Germans anxious to surrender! I began to wonder what went on here? Something was defi-

nately fishy about my information. When I remembered the strength of our little force, all but fifteen completely untrained, and already occupied with more than their own number of prisoners, I shivered. If the Germans ever found out the nature and size of our 'force,' I knew I would be a dead duck.

"I turned to Rago, the only American within fifty miles, and said: 'Go back to the river and order our men to hold their fire until I return.'

"Rago disappeared instantly, the Germans straining futilely through the mist for a glimpse of our American army.

"For ten uneasy minutes I and the Germans stood stiffly apart, awaiting Rago's return. I lit a cigarette, took a couple of puffs to occupy myself. I figured we might as well get it over with, the quicker the better. Finally, Rago returned, and we followed the officers up the road. The houses were coming alive now; farmers, out for their early-morning chores, stopped to stare at us. Prisoners, probably, they were thinking. Prisoners—yes; but my worry now was who was to be the prisoner of whom?

"At about two hundred yards, two small horse-drawn carts were standing. I entered the first with the captain; Peter followed in the second with the lieutenant.

"The German lieutenant began to question Corporal Rago in Italian. 'Don't answer a damned thing, Peter!' I yelled, figuring that if any-



one were to spill the beans, it had better be me.

"In ten minutes we were within the city proper. One glance at the streets, and I knew that my early fears were justified. For the first time a sharp sense of personal fear hit me. Hundreds of heavily armed German soldiers were milling about; every second one seemed to have an automatic weapon slung over his shoulder. Barbed wire and sandbagged buildings were everywhere. Surrender? If ever a town looked ready for a fight, this was it.

"Down the main street we went; the German soldiers stared at us but said nothing. A bicycle pulled up beside my cart, and a well-dressed Italian addressed me in English: 'What's going on here?' The German captain struck the fingers of the man holding the edge of the cart, and with a guttural curse ordered him away.

"He was taking no chances, either. I wondered if it was a trap? If it were, we were finished; if it weren't, what would I say to the German commander? A hundred schemes crowded into my mind. They all seemed fantastic.

"The cart stopped before an imposing hotel and with a curt nod, the German indicated that I should alight. We stepped through the door, and then into a small office at the left.

"I'll never forget the shock of what I saw in that room: seated around a table were twelve tight-faced German officers. There was a rapid exchange

of phrases between the captain and the senior officer, a middle-aged, sharp-faced Nazi with white cap and insignia that I guessed was naval. The rest of the officers were of the German army; and their bitter faces turned grimly toward me as I stood uneasily by the door.

"The German naval commander spoke. His words were in perfect English. 'Won't you be seated, sir?' he said, signaling to a chair at his right.

"Slowly I walked toward the seat. The man spoke English—so much the better. I knew that what I was going to say now would save or destroy our lives. I knew my manner would be watched closely by these tough-looking babies.

"I settled myself firmly in the chair. The eyes of the men never left my face. They were waiting for me to speak. Might as well make it good. Everything or nothing, I thought, and then I let them have it—my wildest idea of all: 'I am Lieutenant George Hearn of the United States Army. I am in command of the forward scouting unit of my regiment, which is deployed in strength just across the Brenta. I also am in radio communication with Army headquarters and with the Allied Air Force. My colonel has sent me across the river to offer you a chance for an honorable surrender before we start an air bombardment and an all-out attack. Our purpose is to prevent useless loss of life,' I said firmly.

"FOR a moment the German commander looked straight at me. I stared back, and then turned and slowly looked at the other men about the table.

"This was it, I knew; was there the slightest chance that they would believe me? I prayed God to let me put it over. . . . Contact with Army Headquarters—and the Air Force! I had no communication with them whatsoever. The only Allied force I knew to be within fifty miles was Pop-sky's sixty-man jeep unit, which had started the push inland yesterday morning; the only American with whom I had any contact at all was my five-foot-two corporal standing quietly there in the corner. As for our 'regiment'—thirty Italian irregulars hiding out across the Brenta. It seemed impossible that they would swallow my bluff.

"They were talking now, swiftly, sharply, in clipped German. The men around the table were seemingly questioning the commander. The officer turned to me. Here it was! I tried to look calm.

"The words came slowly: 'If I decide to surrender, can you call off the Air Force immediately?'

God! We had done it. My heart started to pound. Carefully I made myself relax, and replied:

"I can radio them the minute I return to my unit."

"I was anxious to find out now just how many of them there were and asked, 'How many men have you?'



The German straightened up suddenly. Here it was—the question that Hearn feared.

"'Eleven hundred,' said the commander, eying me carefully.

"I was so stunned I couldn't reply, and merely nodded. Eleven hundred! What in hell would we do with them? I did not trust myself to look at Rago, but kept my eyes on the commander's face, half-hearing what he was saying.

"The German was concerned about the food, housing and general welfare of his men . . . Many were Russians, forced into Hitler's service. I must promise they would not be turned over to the Russian army. . . .

"I replied:

"'No, all prisoners will be prisoners of the American and British forces.' That much I could say with assurance—as to who those American and British forces would be, that was my problem.

"Now I began to think more clearly—the housing and feeding. Except for what we had captured last night, we had no food for ourselves. With a sudden inspiration I waved my hand magnanimously. 'I suggest you carry

on with those details as before, sir,' I said coolly. 'You know the local situation better than we do.'

"The German nodded gravely and swallowed it completely. He seemed to figure this American was a gentleman.

"The phone in the corner started to buzz imperatively. A staff officer answered it. With a show of calmness, I lit a cigarette, settled back in my chair. I could feel myself getting hot with tenseness. . . . Suppose this was an exposure—what would we do? Try to bluff some more?

"The German on the phone was shouting angrily. With a loud bang he slammed down the receiver, turned and flung a torrent of words at the commander.

"The commander looked sharply at me. 'Two of my soldiers have just been shot in cold blood by some Italian partisans in the outskirts of the town. I will not surrender to any Italians! Surrender or no, I will order my men to kill any partisans that set foot in this town!'

"'I will put an immediate stop to all that!' I replied as I wondered if I could—my own undisciplined men or others might be breaking loose even now. Well, here was an excuse to get out. I got up and said that I must be getting back to my command to warn the Air Corps and to stop the partisans.

"The commander rose too.

"'Can you take over today?' he asked crisply.

"That last question nearly floored me completely. Where could I find 'British and American forces' to take command of over a thousand German prisoners? I had to say something and get the hell out quickly, so I answered him: 'I shall be back at two this afternoon.' And saluting, I turned, motioned to Rago, and the two of us walked briskly from the room.

"We got into the carts very formally, sat upright as the driver pulled away from the hotel, not trusting ourselves to look at each other. We said not a word until they left us at the place where we had started out an hour before. As soon as we were alone we let out a shout and began pounding each other. We had walked into a fortified German town and come out with a surrender offer! Could we swing it?"

Back at the camp in the field, Hearn's orders were swift. He realized his only chance lay in hiding out here and trying to contact the English jeep unit. Runners were dispatched in several directions in an effort to contact some English patrols; explicit commands were given his men to stop all firing and to warn all Italian civilians that there must be no further action against the Germans.

FOR the next five hours, Hearn paced up and down. At any minute the planes might be over the important target of Chioggia; that would mean the end of the game. He could not use his Italians because their presence in the town would only infuriate the Germans. He must make contact with the English jeep outfit; where were those runners—why in hell didn't they show up?

It was one-thirty when he heard the noise of a car on the road. His eyes strained into the distance. . . . It looked like—by gosh, it was—a jeep. Straight up it came; Hearn rushed forward to meet the driver. He was an English second lieutenant named "Steve," a patrol leader equipped with six jeep and fifteen men.

He listened to Hearn's story open-mouthed. Then, with a shout, he clapped him on the back. "Hell," he shouted, "we'll go in and take over! I'll send the jeeps downstream where some bridges are still up, and they can meet us in town later. Let's go!"

A message was quickly radioed to Army H.Q. to warn the Air Force not to attack. Then furiously the two men pedaled into the city on two "borrowed" bicycles. The center of the town was filled with screaming Italians. Somehow, word of the proposed surrender had been spread around, and the frenzied people were prematurely celebrating their liberation.

In their midst, heavily armed German soldiers were standing sullenly; guards were patrolling in front of all German-occupied buildings. The slightest false step, Hearn realized, would result in a blood bath. This was touchy—they must, somehow, control this delirious population until a large force of Allied troops would arrive.

They were before the hotel now—back through the same door—into the same room. There were the same men around the table, but this time they were not sitting in arrogant stiffness. This was decadence—these bottles of liquor, these disheveled uniforms, these once-proud men drunkenly sobbing.

"We have come to take over!" said Hearn sharply.

"*Mein Führer!*" sobbed the Nazi commander as he staggered to his feet.

He gestured waveringly toward a bottle. Drinks were poured for Hearn and his companion. This was as good a stall for time as any. The Germans were clamoring for news of Germany. What had happened to Hitler and the other top Nazis? "*Kaput, kaput!*" they kept sobbing. It was all over. . . .

Hearn learned now that the German chief was a captain in the German navy, and in top command of the garrison because of the importance of Chioggia as a port. Before the war he had been the captain of a German liner which had visited the United States frequently. So that was the reason for his command of English!

He was eager to listen to Hearn now, to follow any suggestion. The Marine stepped in, suggested the Germans invoke a seven P.M. curfew and furnish soldiers to patrol the streets. That would perhaps avoid trouble. . . .

The German straightened up suddenly. Here it was—the question that Hearn feared.

"Where's your regiment and the colonel?"

Hearn's answer was ready. How it would go over he did not know, but this was a game of chance, and so far the winning cards had all been with him.

"Since you have agreed to an honorable surrender, he is swinging his forces around the city and is heading north."

How an OSS Naval officer, using submarine and Catalina flying-boat, set up and maintained a secret island base one thousand miles behind Jap lines in Southeast Asia—told exclusively in next month's BLUE BOOK.

Quickly the commander translated this to his staff. It was the one thing that could shock them into soberness. The air was filled with angry shouts, throaty remonstrances. It was evident that the German officers felt that they had been tricked—the forces to whom they had surrendered were now on their way to kill and capture still more of their fellows.

The discussion waxed hotter; ugly curses filled the room. Suddenly the German commander spoke. "It makes no difference! All is finished anyhow. I have agreed to surrender and police the town until my men are removed. I'll have a hundred men ready to assist you in keeping perfect order."

The Englishman and Hearn looked at each other. One more touchy situation over with! It could have been that the German commander was saving his face—after all, it was he who had agreed to the surrender—but, at any rate, one more crisis was temporarily over.

THAT night brought one of the strangest scenes of the entire war. Late in the afternoon the six Englishmanned jeeps had arrived. All during the night they patrolled the streets of the town with a squad of armed Germans marching in the rear, and armed Germans riding next to British Tommies on the seats. This show of force quickly curbed the civilian exuberance, and save for the scattered shooting of Fascists, the town was relatively quiet.

For the next two days Hearn and the officers of the British jeep unit which finally assembled in Chioggia—thereby bringing the allied strength up to sixty!—lived, ate, drank and worked with the Germans. They persuaded the commander to move his troops into the coastal batteries just outside of Chioggia where they turned in their arms and locked themselves up. The minefields charts for the harbor and safe courses through the minefields in the rest of the Adriatic were handed over; all shipping in the port and all German supplies were impounded. In addition to the numerous large-caliber coastal guns, sixty-four of the deadly German eighty-eights were captured. The loot was prodigious.

Just when the Germans caught on to his amazing bluff—or whether they

ever did—Hearn never found out, because the day after the last German was locked up the fighting OSS Marine pushed on to Venice, which he found celebrating its own liberation in impressive style. He was there on the momentous May 2nd when, just five days after he had taken the surrender of Chioggia, the German armies in Italy surrendered to the Allies.

One sardonic twist to the whole operation came when the 8th Army headquarters sent elements of an Italian division into Chioggia to carry away the German prisoners—these same Germans who had sworn that no Italian would ever set foot in the town.

Those Germans are probably still wondering to what U. S. Army regiment they surrendered. General Mark Clark would wonder, too, for his nearest American regiment was nearly one hundred miles away at the time!

Hearn's only worry in telling the story is what the Marine Corps will think of a Marine's passing himself off as an Army lieutenant. "They'll probably say one Marine *should* be able to take those eleven hundred Germans prisoner!"

Fact of the matter is—one did.

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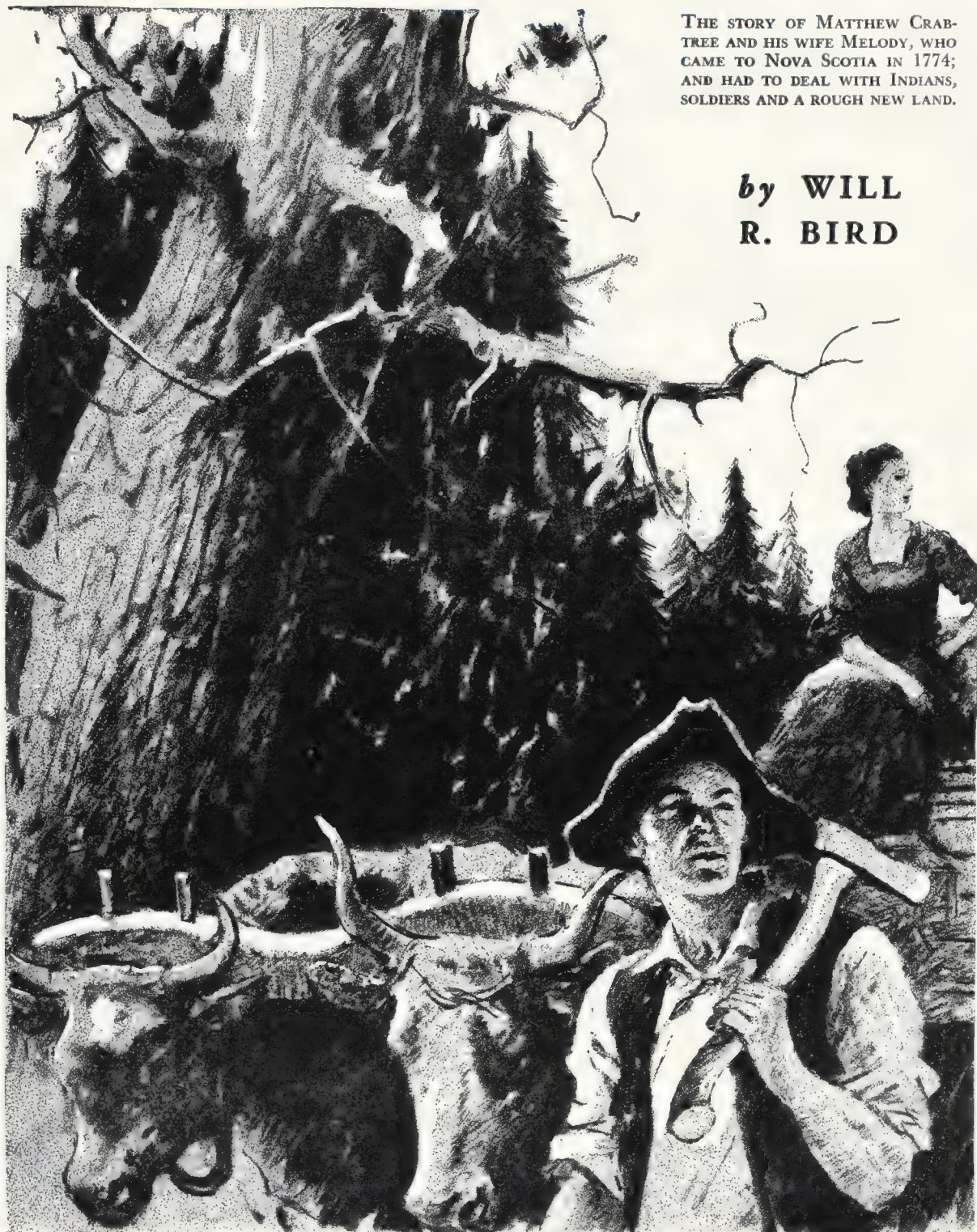
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The Gold-laced Hat

THE STORY OF MATTHEW CRABTREE AND HIS WIFE MELODY, WHO CAME TO NOVA SCOTIA IN 1774; AND HAD TO DEAL WITH INDIANS, SOLDIERS AND A ROUGH NEW LAND.

by WILL
R. BIRD



A SHIPLOAD of Yorkshire settlers sailed for Nova Scotia during the third week of March, 1774, taking with them all their peculiar possessions. There was seed grain stored in the stall-like cabins, a sack being used as a pillow in nearly every berth to keep it dry. In the ship's hold were trunks and chests of drawers, dressers, bedding, hogsheads filled with crockery, scythes, reaping-hooks, plows—everything counted as a necessity in the home.

Matthew Crabtree had ten sacks of the best rye, barley, wheat and oats he had ever screened. His wife Melody had pots and pans, candles, spices and cutlery packed in a large wooden churn. She had her scant finery of cloaks, frilled petticoats and bonnets in an old leather trunk.

Each family had bread and meat and cheese for the first few days, and when these supplies were gone a daily ration of bread and beef was provided.

Stormy weather set in for the first weeks at sea but April turned mild and gentle at the halfway mark. Soon there were regular gatherings on the deck. Rounds of simple games helped pass the hours and wrestling was in-

troduced as a diversion by one of the seamen, a burly fellow with hands like small hams. He challenged any man on the ship, saying they might choose their holds, and offered ten shillings to the man he could not throw.

It seemed a fair enough offer, and there were plenty of takers, for the Yorkshiremen were stout fellows. They had participated in many wrestling bouts at their annual fairs and knew the trick of a "Yorkshire" heel and trip. The best of them, however, lasted little more than ten minutes with the sailor; he had learned his tricks, he boasted, in France and Holland, in such foreign places as Italy and Turkey.

Matthew was exceptionally strong. He had thick shoulders and a deep chest; he could move with deceptive speed for a big man. At the Banfield Fair he had won the wrestling crown three years in a row. So he had some confidence when he walked on the spread canvas to try his luck with the sailor.

Their bout was over before he was properly set. The seaman had a hold that Matthew had never seen used, and he was a tricky fellow. So Matthew went down heavily, was pinned there. The onlookers roared approval and the crew chanted a ditty about farmers who moved on wooden legs.

It was said many times in Banfield that Matthew was the best-natured fellow ever raised in the village. He grinned acknowledgment of his defeat, praised the wrestler, and begged the man to teach him wrestling to the extent of a ten-bob fee. Here was "found money," so the sailor agreed readily enough, and for the next week or so the main attraction on the ship was the sight of the master wrestler teaching a farmer his tricks.

During the second week there was a change in the tempo of their exhibitions. Matthew had proved himself an apt pupil. There came an afternoon when he threw the sailor twice, and the crew began to jeer. After that there was not so much teaching. Matthew paid his ten shillings, and asked for a chance at the seaman's money.

The sailor was wary. It might be, he said, that Matthew could obtain a lucky hold and throw him. So the bout must be for two fair pinnings out of three. Matthew agreed, took off his jacket and shirt and hobnailed shoes, and said he was ready.

The Yorkshiremen said that night it was the finest bit of wrestling they ever expected to see. The sailor took the first fall by tricking Matthew into looking behind him. Then he lost the second one when another ruse failed. They squared away savagely for the third time, and the sailor was in no mood for play. He attacked like a madman, tried to use his knee in foul work, and met his match. Matthew, aroused, seemed to have double his usual strength; he caught the sailor in a fair grip, hoisted him as if he were a boy, and slammed him to the deck with such violence that the man's arm was broken.

There was no more wrestling on the ship.

WHEN they arrived at Halifax the Yorkshiremen were told they would be transferred to small schooners which made the trip up the Bay of Fundy to the Cumberland area. The women and children, with the older folk, would go on the first trip; the men could wait, or walk overland.

Matthew was young and eager to get settled. He managed to find a place for Melody on the first schooner, had their belongings shipped with her



and with Ezra Hodge, another young man, set out on foot from Halifax.

It was early May, and the air was good. They thrilled at the sight of new bushes and birds. Thickets of red maple were in bloom. Tasseled alders shed clouds of sulphur-colored pollen by little brooks. The white bloom of wild cherry and Indian pear splashed against the dark greenery of spruce and fir. They stayed the night at a river ferry, bedded roughly in the log shack of a squatter who sold them spruce beer at fourpence a pint.

IN the morning they were away early, following the well-worn slot of an Indian trail over a long ridge that would lead them near Cumberland Basin. Late in the afternoon they made camp by a brook of deep pools. The ground was soft with spruce needles and they made beds of small brush. Then Matthew gathered dead sticks from a blowdown and placed them cunningly on paper-dry inner bark from the fallen tree. He took out his tinderbox and struck the small steel rod on the rifle flint he kept screwed fast to the lid until a brighter spark flew and the filmy bark flared into flame. The fire took life from the dried sticks. The blaze caught hold and sent up curled strings of rusty smoke that smelled acrid and half-sweet.

Ezra cut a withy pole, attached a trout line and soon had landed three trout that, gutted and washed, still weighed more than three pounds. They ate the fish with great relish, rubbing greasy fingers on their breeches. They drank scalding tea and finished with slabs of bread and cheese. Darkness had fallen when they were done and when they lay on their brush beds they could see a fine moon lamping over the ridge they had traveled.

"We'll have champion weather," prophesied Matthew. "They towed me back in town t' way wur shorter by this Indian path. We'll keep on it 'stead o' taking t' blazed trail oop at end o' ridge."

There was a grunt of assent, then snores told Matthew that Ezra slept; but the novelty of their situation kept Matthew awake. He could hear the bubbling murmur of the brook and the distant yapping of a fox. Once a whisper of feathers sent a tingle up his spine; the sound was directly over his head, and he saw the broad wings of an owl as it floated across the patch of moonlight above them. Then it was gone as though absorbed by the night.

Moose birds came to them as they ate breakfast. The air was still and the day would be warm. The trail led around a swamp after they left the blazed way usually followed by settlers, then led through clumps of

hackmatack and black spruce shaggy with gray-green moss beards. Black flies bothered them but they spent a few moments watching a grumbling porcupine climb a sapling.

Late in the day they were near the edge of the forest, when another wide swamp barred their path. They were turning to skirt it when a strange sound halted Ezra.

"I thowt I heard a voice," he said. "In middle o' t' bog."

"It must be a beast or summat," declared Matthew. "Nobody would try to cross on such hummocks." Then he paused to listen. He had heard the sound, and it was like someone grunting loudly, almost groaning.

"I'll cut pole," he said tersely, using his ax. "Tha stay here. I'll go in till I see whear t' man is. If I sink, t' pole will stop me."

He stepped cautiously from one spongy hummock to another, keeping near to old stumps and bush clumps whose roots gave some support. Then he balanced on a mound and stared.

Two Indians were in a space before him. Traces of a path led through the swamp, showing it had been used during the winter months. The redmen had followed along it now. One was standing on a hummock that had yielded until he was in water to his knees and he was trying to extricate his companion, who had only his head above the swamp's mire.

"Tha keep howd o' him," shouted Matthew. "I'll give tha hand in jiffy."

He hurried back the way he had come, and with strong ax-strokes felled a pair of fair-sized hackmatacks. He seized one tree and dragged it to where the Indians were. The one in the mire rolled his eyes but made no attempt to speak. The savage supporting him said one word: "Hurry!" His eyes seemed to protrude from their sockets. His dark visage was beaded with perspiration.

MATTHEW dragged in the second tree. He picked it up and, getting the leverage he wanted, heaved it forward so that it dropped beside the redman who was the deeper in the bog. The second tree was pitched crosswise to the first one. Then Matthew waded out quickly, his weight submerging them, until he was beside the savages.

"Tha stay whear tha are," he said to the Indian who was attempting rescue. "I'll lift him out."

The trees sank, with bubblings, and Matthew felt the water slop to his knees.

"You drown, too," grunted the Indian. "This devil-hole."

Matthew threw himself in a tremendous lunge, taking Danks with him.





"Let bel!" grunted Matthew. He had his pole in one hand. With the other he gripped the submerged red-skin by the nearest wrist, and heaved.

His effort plunged him deeper. The water was at his waist. But he hoisted the savage. Another heave and Matthew had the redman across his shoulder. He turned, felt for a footing on the sunken trees, found one, stepped once, twice, three times, and was out of the worst of the swamp. A moment later he had his man beside Ezra. Then he sniffed.

"T' lad's drunk," Matthew panted. "Slopped wi' rum."

The other Indian had stood where he was. He seemed exhausted and Matthew had almost to carry him to safe footing.

"You good man." The redman sat on a knoll in the last sunlight of the day, retching with rum sickness, scraping swamp mud from his clothing. "You not come, we drown. Injun not forget."

The other Indian was lying flat on his back. He was a smaller brave, and a scar gave him the appearance of a perpetual grin. He rolled his head. "Amen," he grunted.

"Him drunk," said the first Indian. "Trade skin at fort. Plenty drunk. No speak English. Can say 'amen'—no more."

It was chilly when the sun had gone, so Matthew built a fire. He and Ezra divided the last of their food with the Indians, and tried to talk with the one who spoke English. But the redmen were feeling the effects of their experience. They curled up like dogs and slept.

In the morning Matthew discovered it was but a short distance to a clearing. Here an Acadian settler fed them hot potato-soup and dark bread. At floodtide he put them in his boat and rowed them across to Fort Cumberland, using a strong unhurried pull with a fisherman's tug at the end of it.

There was plenty of stir at the barracks. The schooner had arrived and the unloading had been done. Settlers were there with carts, anxious to help the Yorkshiresmen get located, and willing to move their belongings for a few shillings.

Matthew gazed over the marshes. There were thousands of acres, their tidal rivers ugly red ditches when the sea had ebbed—the home of countless muskrats that inhabited little run-offs and silts from the main streams, the nesting-place of black ducks and the spring haunt of wild geese and brant.

"I'll not stop here," he said to Melody. "It's too much like t' sea."

The marsh smells were salty and strong. A million peepers sang at night from little pools near the upland.

"We'll find place whear thear is t' sugar maples," he announced. "I'll put stuff in cart I bought. In morning we'll yoke oxen and go."

In the morning he lingered, however, for some of the soldiers at the fort had arranged for a shooting-contest, and for races. Matthew had a zest for sport of any nature and he soon made excuses to put off going for another day while Melody shook her head, pursed her lips and declared he was no more than a boy—to waste time when so much was to be done!

He grinned good-naturedly and let her have her say, for Melody was a good wife, a smart wife—such a worker, in fact, that he often told her she would be worn out before she was old. It was always do this and do that with her. Rub and scrub. No idle hands in an honest house. A busy woman and a clean kitchen.

The shooting was poor. The soldiers used their muskets and seemed unsure of their powder. Then horses were raced on a track leading to the marsh, but the soft earth prevented much show of speed. It seemed that the day would not be much after all, and Matthew was debating the wisdom of a late start from the fort when a booming voice caught his attention.

He turned to see a huge man ride up on a big black stallion. The newcomer slid to earth and tied his horse in a fence corner. He stood six feet four in his moosehide moccasins and weighed, a soldier told Matthew, two hundred and twelve pounds.

"His name's Gid Danks," the red-coat added, "and he's the best wrestler in this country, like as not in all Ameriky. He's brought his hat with him. That's the prize he won two years ago. He'll offer it to any man who can throw him, and every time new folks arrive he rides in to banter 'em."

Matthew began to breathe a little faster. He heard the big man shouting his challenge and saw him waving a fine hat with gold lace on its brim. Then Danks came toward him.

"You're a good size, Yorkie," he shouted. "You ought to be good on a lift. If you had reach, you'd likely be good as I am."

Matthew could feel his pulse hammering. "I'd like to try for t' hat," he said as calmly as he could manage. "Happen I throw tha two oot o' three, do I win it?"

"Ho-ho!" roared Danks. "Yorkie feels his oats! Done, my young rooster! I'll stake the hat that you can't throw me once out of a dozen times."

They doffed hats and jackets and faced each other on the sod beside the fort road. Their rush and clinching was a shock of bone and muscle. Their heels dug inches in the turf. They heaved and grunted swung

around, wrenched apart, gripped again. But Matthew had achieved an outer arm hold he wanted and he was like a grizzly in strength. He withstood every desperate counter Danks could contrive; then he thrust with hip and heel. Danks struggled, crashed his full length with Matthew on top, and was pinned, fairly.

"The devil has britches!" gulped Danks, breathless. "I didn't know the man lived who could do that! You tricked me grand—you never learned *that* in your father's barn!"

"Noa," admitted Matthew. "I've wrestled at t' fairs hoam."

Danks climbed to his feet. "Other Yorkies have wrestled at fairs, too," he panted, "but none of them knowed holds like you do. You wait till I git my wind back. This here match aint over yet."

WHEN they'd rested, every man at the fort was in the circle about them. They watched each other more warily now. Twice they moved around the ring, reaching out, then jumping back, each determined to gain some advantage. Then Danks charged. He came with a rush that was designed to crash Matthew with sheer weight. But Matthew had had good value for his ten shillings paid to the sailor. He avoided the rush as he had been taught to do, caught an arm and swung Danks around without letting the bigger man get hold of him. Then he surged in closely, drove a knee back of Danks and threw himself in a tremendous lunge, taking Danks with him. Before they hit the ground, the momentum of his effort had twisted Danks underneath. They struck earth like a tree falling. Before the champion could recover, Matthew had pinned him solidly.

Danks arose slowly. He stood and stared at Matthew. "You're the ablest man ever I tackled," he wheezed. "Here—take this hat. You've got ten years on me, so I've too much sense to hope I'll win it back. Any time you're ridin' past, you stop in at Gid Danks' cabin. He's your friend."

The black stallion squealed and reared, but Danks mounted it. He waved a hand and rode away, thundering down the cart trail.

"I've been here a year, pining to git back to Halifax," said the soldier who had been friendly, "but you won't hear another growl. What I seen here today is worth a year on this marsh. I never hoped to see a man who'd be able to throw Danks."

Matthew took the hat and wore it the rest of the day. He laughed at Melody when she tried to scold him. He had never felt better in his life.

The day was crawling down the fields as Matthew's cart creaked along the fort road the next morning. Toad-

spit and spider webs on the grass were omens of warmer weather. Light yellows and bright greens, dew-washed, glittered as the first sun fingered the upland. A flock of crows rose out of woods to their left. Dogs on the fort ridge roused and began to bay and bark in alternate fright and challenge.

A settler had mentioned good land to be had for the taking at a spot named Bathol. It was, the man had said, perhaps lonely for a woman who might be timid of the Indians, but in a year or so there would be plenty of neighbors. The soil was rich, it was sheltered land near a river, and plenty of fine sugar maples grew on the upland.

They reached the place the second afternoon. Matthew drove his oxen from the trail to a horseshoe slope overlooking the river and sheltered by wooded hills. A small cellar pitted its center and traces of a path were there, leading to a spring with a ring of flat stones.

In a week Matthew had built a log cabin good enough to do until the fall, and then he planted potatoes and grain. On a Sunday he took his rifle and pampered it with rag and oil.

"Let's walk in t' woods," he invited Melody. "Tha can see t' sugar maples."

It was cool and quiet as night under the trees. They found a trail and followed it over the maple ridge. The bigger trees were scarred with ax-marks where some settler had gathered sap from them. But the path led on across a barren, then to a brook where two trees had been felled to serve as a bridge.

THEY rested in a glade and ate their lunch. Black-capped chickadees ignored them as they rested, and a chipmunk took bits from Matthew's fingers. Melody enjoyed the day so much that she declared they would return the next Sabbath.

Matthew built a pole shed over the spring and Melody kept bowls of sweet milk there. She took out a bowl for dinner and had placed it outside while she filled a water-bucket when she heard coarse drinking sounds. She looked out. A dirty-looking Indian had the bowl to his lips and was drinking with sucking noises. "Tha filthy brute!" she blazed.

The redman continued to swallow, so she wrenched the bowl from him, slopping milk over his jacket and breeches.

"Get from here," Melody ordered. "Don't tha dare coom again."

He glared at her. "You poor squaw," he sneered.

"Get!" she said tightly. "Go!"

He shrugged, turned and went toward the woods.

Plunging in, she waded across . . . no time to search for a dry crossing.



Melody told Matthew what had happened. "Tha should be more patient," he warned. "We want no trouble wi' Indians."

"We'll have none," she said grimly. "I'll handle them!"

They had a good summer. The crops thrived amazingly. Matthew cut timbers to use as a frame for a barn. He dug a cellar for his potatoes.

The last of September was warm and balmy. Melody discovered a

blackberry thicket back of the pasture and took a bowl there one afternoon when the air was still and locusts sang from old stumps. She was gathering the luscious fruit when a moist hand was clamped over her mouth and she was held, helpless, as a gag of leather was bound in place. She lost her bowl and berries as she twisted violently, kicking and lunging, and got a look at her captors. One was the redskin who had taken the milk and the other was a smaller brave with a curious scar on his face.

WHEN they were well into the woods the gag was removed. Melody retched and was sick. When she was ready to go on, the Indians walked her between them.

"Tha will be sorry," she gasped. "My husband will catch thee."

They gave her no heed and when she saw they were on the path she and Matthew had traveled many Sundays, she was heartened. At the barren the Indians located a cache of blankets and an iron kettle.

"You carry," the big redman ordered. The smaller savage looked as if he were grinning. "Amen," he said pertly.

Melody pushed from her every tale she had heard of a white woman being taken captive by Indians. She concentrated her thinking upon escape.

A spruce partridge scurried from their path, and the smaller Indian gave chase. Soon he was lost to view in a series of thickets. Another partridge appeared. Melody let her load of blankets drop on moss without making a sound. As the redman beside her turned, she snatched the hatchet from his belt. He tried swiftly to seize her, but she struck him on the head with the flat of the weapon. The blow tingled her arm, felt harsh. The Indian's knees buckled under him and he slid down in a heap. Melody turned and ran, as the kettle she had dropped rolled against a tree.

She flung the hatchet away, gathered her skirts and petticoats high, and ran as she had never run in her life. She plunged through thickets, heading toward the brook, and was sobbing for breath when she blundered onto the trail leading from the bridge of two trees.

The discovery encouraged her. Not a sound had come from the woods behind her. She did not know how far she had run, but she was sure the smaller Indian would be on her trail as soon as he had examined his companion. She slowed, thinking. The savage would overtake her long before she was through the maple grove on the far side of the barren.

She reached the barren, and stopped. Matthew had often said it would be impossible to track anything on its sun-baked soil. She turned to

her right a distance, then circled back to the woods and crouched under a thick hemlock. Her heart pounded like a mad thing and she was so exhausted that she was shaking, when she saw the Indian.

He emerged from the woods and continued over the barren at a steady jog. Then she started again. The bigger redskin, the one she had felled with the hatchet, appeared. He trotted doggedly but one side of his face was streaked with blood. He looked neither right nor left, and she knew that both Indians were sure she would keep to the path.

When they were gone she skirted the edge of the barren, crossed the path and headed directly for the brook. She knew it would lead her out to the intervalle. It was getting dark under the trees and the hardest part of her travel was ahead of her, but her courage was revived.

She found the brook and there was no time to search for a dry crossing. Plunging in, she waded to her knees, slipping on stones and splashing. The chill of the water set her teeth chattering; then she was across, scrambling through thickets of hemlock and spruce. Sometimes she had to detour around the thicker growths, but the sound of the brook served as a guide. She kept listening to it as she pushed her way through the undergrowth.

The last light vanished and the woods became inky black, eerie, men-

acing. Branches slashed at her face. Repeatedly she tripped on tree roots and fell. Something bounded from a thicket beside her and crashed through the bush in wild fright. A fox yapped somewhere in the darkness. Snags caught her dress of linsey-woolsey and held her firmly until she could grope with her hands and free the cloth. She was bleeding from scratches on her face, her hands and wrists.

A glimpse of the moon helped her. The woods became less dense. Soon she saw openings. She was very tired but she began to run again. Then she climbed over a brush-and-pole fence to enter the pasture near the blackberry bushes.

MATTHEW'S shout startled her. He had lighted a candle and put it in the cabin window. Then he had gone to the edge of the woods to wait and to call at intervals:

"Mel-o-deeee! Mel-o-deeee!"

"Shut thy noise," she gasped. "I'm coom."

He ran to her, and she almost collapsed in his arms. "It wur Indians," she panted. "One o' them is big as tha art. It wur him I slopped milk on. They took me to t' woods. They



*Illustrated
by Maurice
Bower*



*The Indian circled
to catch her. When
Melody tried to
dart away, he
leaped to seize her.*

gagged me. I hit him wi' hatchet he had. I hid by t' barren. Then I waded brook. Thear wur beasts in t' bush, but they ran. Get summat for me to eat—I'm fair famished."

She could scarcely stop talking and he sensed she was on the verge of becoming hysterical. When she slumped to a bench in the kitchen she was a sorry sight. Her hair was about her neck, having been torn loose by contact with brush. Her skirt was torn and dragged with twigs and brook water. Matthew, gazing at her, became more enraged as he listened.

When she had had several bowls of hot soup she felt better, and he exam-

ined her hurts. The sight of her scratches and bruises made his temper flare anew.

"I'd like to put hands on t' red-skin," he gritted.

"Tha better stay wi' me tomorrow," said Melody. "I hit him hard!"

"I'll stay," vowed Matthew. Then he began to think of the situation. He could not stay from his work for a great while, and time meant nothing to the redmen.

"In t' morning," he decided, "I'll go wi' t' oxen doon t' field. But I'll coom quick 'round t' bushes and get back o' t' spring shed. Tha go about t' yard as if tha cared for nowt. But

wait in cabin here till I've time to coom back."

He was proud when Melody agreed readily to the scheme. She had more courage, he reflected, than most men, and she was a hustling worker. Her ambition to get on more than matched his own; at times she still berated him for losing a day at the fort by wrestling for a hat!

He awoke several times in the night and listened for prowlers outside. He visualized Melody being forced into the woods, and rage heated him until he could scarcely sleep.

In the morning he watched sharply as he did his chores, but saw no trace

of any skulkers. After breakfast he yoked his cattle and headed them toward a lower part of the intervale. Once out of sight of the cabin, he halted them and left them. They were quiet beasts, used to such procedure, and there were no flies to bother them.

He hurried under the trees, spurred on by the sound of a squirrel chirring nervously. In his hurry, however, he did not forget caution—and so he saw the large redskin without being seen: The savage was hidden back of the pole shed, and he had a long musket beside him.

Melody came from the cabin with a wooden bucket in her hand. She walked toward the shed—and as she did, the Indian circled around it to catch her. He moved swiftly and when Melody tried to dart away he placed his musket on the ground, then leaped to seize her.

MATTHEW noticed two things as he raced from cover. He saw that a second savage, a smaller redman, was coming from the woods, and that Melody had something concealed in her bucket.

The soft sod of the cabin yard made no sound as Matthew ran. He seized the big Micmac by the shoulders and flung him away from Melody. He charged him again and flung him heels-over-teacup among the chips of the woodyard.

"Watch t'other!" he shouted to Melody.

It seemed as if the big savage were made of rubber. He rolled over and came up with such speed that he had secured a hold on Matthew before Matthew could whirl to face him. Their struggle was hectic. Matthew was furious at being caught off guard, and the Indian was quick of hand and foot. It ended with his tripping Matthew neatly and hurling him to the yard.

Then he snatched up the musket. He pointed it at Matthew and pulled the trigger. There was a dull clicking sound. The flint had failed to function.

In the next heartbeat Matthew was at him; he seized the musket and tore it from the redskin, hurled it away. Then they clinched in desperate effort.

The Indian was a hefty warrior. He was as tall as Matthew and as quick on his feet. He used his hands and elbows like a wrestler, and was adept at securing holds. In a moment he had squirmed free from Matthew's first grip, and tried to apply one of his own.

His act infuriated Matthew further. This redman was over-bold! Did he think he could wrestle a Yorkshireman? Did any redman think himself as good as an Englishman?

In a fury of action he wrenched from the Indian's hold, flung him backward, crashed a shoulder into him and toppled him—caught him while off balance, seizing him by the arms and holding him with a mad surge of strength. Then he hoisted the savage bodily and whipped him over his shoulder. The redman dropped like a sack of meal.

For a fraction of time he lay there; then he shot up as if released by a spring. He leaped high, kicking, and attacked Matthew. It was an attack the sailor had described, and Matthew avoided it with ease, then lunged in and gained a fierce grip. He whirled, wrenching the redskin off his feet, whirled again, swung him upward. Then he crashed him down heavily, turned on him like a tiger and held him there.

The smaller Indian had jumped to recover the musket, but Melody had moved in the same direction. Furthermore she had with her a stout ladle made of hardwood that she had hidden in the bucket. She struck with precision. The maple cracked against the Indian's skull, and he staggered away from her.

Matthew rose from the big savage. He prodded him with his foot.

"Get oop!" he ordered.

His rage was like that of many good-natured persons. It was slow to gather—and slow to subside.

He reached down and boosting the redman to his feet, shook him as if he were a boy.

It was enough. The savage came to life; he put everything he possessed in power and trickery to back-heel Matthew. It was a futile struggle. Matthew held him by sheer strength. His rage had reached a climax. He shifted his hold suddenly, picked the redskin up as if he were a boy and spun him in the air, then drove him downward so that he struck the earth with his head and shoulders.

The impact was terrific. The Indian lay there, unable to rise.

"Tha art Indian him," praised Melody. "Take his musket."

The smaller redman was gazing stupidly at his fellow on the ground. He turned and looked at Matthew. His face bore a scar that made him appear to be grinning.

"Hullo!" said Matthew wonderingly. "Tha art Indian who wur in t' bog. What made tha coom here?"

The smaller savage made no reply, but recognition flamed across his visage. He bent over the big Indian who was sitting up, and spoke rapidly.

Matthew was cooling. He stared back at the redmen as the bigger one rose groggily to his feet.

"What did tha coom for?" he challenged.

"Me no know you live here," mumbled the big Indian. His face bled

from small scratches he had received in the chipyard and one ear was torn. His clothing was plastered with bits of wood. "You squaw poor to me."

He rubbed himself as if uncertain of where he was hurt most. "You throw big man on black horse?" he queried.

"Aye," nodded Matthew. "At t' fort."

"You good man," admitted the redskin.

Melody was standing with her ladle ready, but she spoke calmly. "Happen we better give over," she said. "I reckon they're sorry they coom."

Matthew picked up the musket. He tried to remember all he had been told about the Indians.

"Thy flint is poor," he said. "I'll fix it for tha."

Melody turned to the spring house. She emerged with a bowl of milk and handed it to the big Indian. "Tha need summat," she said cheerfully. "Drink all tha want."

The redman accepted the bowl gravely. He put down his head and drank, making loud sucking noises. When he was finished he handed the bowl to the smaller savage, who also drank.

Matthew got an extra flint from his cabin and replaced the defective one. "Thy musket will not miss now," he said, "but don't tha try shoot me."

Both Indians stared at him as if they could scarce credit their senses. The big Indian slowly reached to take the firearm. Then Matthew stepped into his cabin and came back with a fine gold-laced hat.

"Tha take this," he said to the big Indian. "I won it from man on t' black horse. Tha art best man I've wrestled. Tha art champion quick wi' thy hands."

THE big redskin's dourness was broken. A smile spread over the scratches and dirt on his cheeks. He accepted the hat, put it on carefully and found it a perfect fit.

"You fine man," he said heartily. "We go. We friends now."

The smaller redskin stepped toward Melody. He extended the milk bowl, nearly empty, as if it were a peace-offering, watching her warily.

"I won't hit tha again," she said, "happen tha don't bother me more."

He stepped smartly from her range. "Amen!" he said, and followed the big Indian under the trees.

Matthew felt immense relief settle over him. "Tha wur champion," he said to Melody. "I'd kiss, thee, lass, if thy face wur not sore. That wur best wrestle I've ever had. It's a pity thear wur no more to see."

Melody's own relief made her voice tremulous. "I'll not say word 'gainst thy wrestling again," she said. "Happen tha hear o' games at t' fort, tha go and get thyself another hat!"

BLUE BOOK is glad to receive letters from you, our readers, telling us what you are thinking about—about your own experiences or problems; or your opinions on national or international affairs.

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Faith in the Future

ALTHOUGH I am still stationed overseas, my wife and I devote a major part of our letters to plans for the future. How are we to make our dreams come true? My post-war work is, of course, our biggest problem and greatest concern. I attended Pre-Med school before entering the army, and my life ambition has always been the medical profession. Lynn was firm in insisting that I go back to college for my degree. She didn't want our marriage to interfere with my desire to be a doctor.

I hesitated in definitely including medical school in our future plans. If I return to school, how was I to support a wife even with the financial aid of the G. I. Bill of Rights? Lynn decided that this was a minor obstacle—she could work and help support us. I wasn't too keen about Lynn working; I had at least four years of schooling ahead of me. Wasn't it unfair to expect my wife to work that length of time? Wasn't it my responsibility to support her? This problem bothered me for weeks. I wanted Lynn to be as happy, secure, and free from worry as possible. Perhaps it would be best to forget about being a doctor and seek steady employment.

I voiced these doubts and fears to Lynn in one of my daily letters. Shortly thereafter, three days went by without a letter from Lynn. Was she angry? The next day the mail-clerk handed me an envelope with Lynn's familiar handwriting on it. I eagerly tore it open. Nothing was in it but a picture! It was a photograph of a weather-beaten, crumbling wooden shack, surrounded by a yard that resembled a garbage dump. I was disappointed by the absence of a letter. Did she place the photograph in the envelope by mistake?

The following day I received another letter from Lynn. I opened it on the spot—I hadn't heard from her in five days! The envelope only contained another picture. It was a snapshot of a dilapidated, rusty model-T Ford. Was she trying to play a joke on me?

What Do You Think?

A Readers' Forum

With slight foreboding, I ran my fingers over Lynn's next letter. On opening it, I discovered a newspaper clipping, but still no letter. The clipping was a photograph of an old man and woman, clad in torn, shabby clothes, selling newspapers on a corner. The eyes staring out at me were bitter and sad. What possessed Lynn to send silly pictures but not letters?

I wasn't surprised when I received a large, brown envelope at the next mail call. I expected anything now! I didn't open the flap until I reached the privacy of my bunk. I pulled out a large piece of cardboard. I ran my eyes over the large printed words. This is what I read: "The miserable shack and useless car belong to the couple who were afraid to work together when they were young. The two poverty-stricken old people were once a young married couple who didn't have faith in their future."

Something was clipped to the piece of cardboard. I loosened the metal clip, and removed what appeared to be a check. "*The Bank of Matrimony*" was written across the top. "*PAY TO: My wife, Lynn, a lifetime of happiness and comfort. IN PAYMENT FOR: Four years of loving and willing co-operation.*" At the bottom, Lynn's handwriting indicated: "*Sign here.*" What a wife! Whipping out my pen, I joyfully added my signature to the check. Part of our future planning was now on a strictly legal basis.

Cpl. W. H. Tabor

Crippled Flight

I LOOKED out of the train window as we slowed down pulling into the station. The stop would only be for a couple of minutes. My car was drawn across a street in this little Florida town. As I looked, something attracted my attention.

Coming toward the train was a white butterfly fluttering along the pavement. It had been hurt, and could not raise itself off the ground.

Strutting after it, very cocky, was a little bird—his chest out, self-confidence in every stride, ready to make the kill. The train started. And as I watched as far as I could, it seemed to me that the distance between the two remained the same

I caught myself wondering: "Did he get away?"

Later, seated in the dine, an Army Air Corps captain sat down across the table from me. I could tell from his ribbons that he'd come from the European theater and had seen much action. He was looking out the window, and he startled me when he spoke out loud. Talking to no one in particular he said: "I hope he got away."

The same thought had just been running through my mind. I looked at him and said: "You near the crippled butterfly?" He turned. "You noticed it too," he muttered. Then he looked at me fully—or as I felt, through me. There was misery in his eyes. He looked like a man so tired that he could never again in his whole life feel rested. The kind of tiredness that war puts and leaves in many, many men.

I wore civilian clothes. As he eyed me, I spoke—I had to: "Marine Air—South Pacific—just out." He nodded as if to say: "You understand . . . you've been through it too."

We gave our orders to the waiter. Then both of us looked out the window as the train bumped along. He was thinking of pals shot down by the Germans—wondering if some break had saved them before they crashed.

I was thinking of those good kids flying for the Navy and Marine Corps in the Pacific, in the early days of the war, when they were fighting against heavy odds and didn't have much to fight with. When the only things that kept them flying and held their planes together were damned good ground crews—and spit, wire and the courage of the men who flew them.

I was remembering seeing boys limp and weave as they were hit and started to fall—two or three cocky Zeros on their tails, closing in for the kill. And the thought uppermost in my mind at the time: "Hope he gets away—hope—"

The Captain and I ate in silence. He didn't know my name, or I his. We'll never know. He got off the train sometime in the night, and I don't believe we'll ever meet again. But at odd moments, all through our lives, we'll share a thought, like a prayer: "I hope he got away."

Bert C. Lynch

High-air Hogger

HIGH air began to build. The gauge needle ran to ten, then fifteen, slowly paced the dial until it rested at forty pounds. The lock-tender blew his nose to equalize the pressure; and the men lined along the benches in the man-lock coughed and blew and hawked against the weight of the air.

Tony Angelo, familiarly called "Angel," scowled at his blocky fists, curving his calloused fingers, then releasing them. Perspiration gleamed on his hairy chest, and muscles cabled beneath his skin when he moved.

"He's yellow," he said, "just plain dirty yellow."

The nurse at his side gasped slightly from the pressure, bronze hair clinging damply to her forehead.

"It's his heart, Angel," she explained, and her tone gave the words the lie. "He can't take high air."

Angel shivered. "If Red dies, I'll know who killed him." His wide mouth thinned. "I don't forget easy."

The blast of air stilled, and the inner lock sucked free of the rubber flange. Ahead lay the tunnel, misty, damp, vanishing into darkness.

"Out!" the lock-tender called, and the men went from the lock, going single-file along the incline.

Angel and Nina followed, the girl's crisp white clothes making her ghost-like in the misty dimness. She walked with sure-footed ease along the side of the muck-car tracks, the big sandhog at her back, both going toward the heading.

"You in love with the Doc?" Angel said suddenly.

Nina flushed, shook her head. "I feel sorry for him."

"Hell!" Angel said disgustedly.

"Bob's all right," Nina defended. "He knows tunnels and the men. He thinks he can help."

Sandhogs were streaming by now, big sweaty men who laughed and called greetings as they passed. Behind, the man-lock began to fill again.

"He's yellow," Angel said flatly, and spat. "I was in the Hudson blow where his brother got killed. He went off his nut—wouldn't ever go back in a tunnel again. That was ten years ago. Now he pops up, calling himself a doctor, and he still won't enter a tunnel. What good is he going to be around here?"

They stepped aside, let muck-cars pass, then went on again. The air

pressed hot and sticky, and fog swirled through the tunnel from the shifting pressure of forty pounds of high air. Tunnelmen were like shadows in the fog, big-chested, muscled like Titans, fighting the earth as though it were a deadly enemy.

The dull roaring of work built ahead, reached out and drew them in. Air piled into the tunnel, sounding shrill and dangerous, and the clang of steel on steel was an overtone that never ceased. When men talked in the tunnel, they shouted, for ordinary sounds were blotted into the hellish bedlam of boring beneath the river.

"He's over here," Angel said at last, and led the way.



"It's his heart, Angel," Nina explained. "If Red dies—"
Angel shivered.

Big Red was grinning through set lips, but the sweat of agony lay in oily bubbles on his skin. Bone was white against the flesh of his lower chest, and he breathed harshly, lying on his back, discarded shirts wadded into a pillow.

"Hi, beautiful!" he said to Nina.

The nurse nodded, bent and began to work. Her hands were incredibly gentle, and she did not smile. Angel watched for a moment, then turned with a sense of relief, watched the men at the heading.

Angel grinned; this was his home, his empire, and he would have had no other. High pressure lay in his blood and heart; for fifteen years he had been driving tunnels through rock and earth, through mountains, under rivers. Danger walked side by side with him, and he laughed each time he met it, fighting it with the power of his body, matching strength for strength, smiling, always smiling.

"Angel" he was called by the men who worked with him, not because he was godly, but because he laughed when others cried, because he fought when success could not be won. He was a legend where hoggers met, and he revealed in his might.

And now, watching the iron gang swinging heavy wrenches in muscled hands, fitting in the sections of curved steel plate, he sucked in his breath, remembering the months he had ridden the platform over the centers of tunnels. His hands tightened automatically when he saw the muckers on the floor, stooping and straightening, filling the cars with muck and sand which never ceased coming from the face.

Men worked at the face, battling the earth in half a dozen pockets, balanced carefully on a working platform formed by a cross-member of the bracing, and farther back, hydraulic jacks hugged the rear of the cylindrical shield, ready to inch it forward. This was where the tunnel moved ahead, worming through the solid earth, sweating men cutting and jamming their way, the shield pressing forward, the casing being built behind, iron scale by iron scale.

Nina touched him on the arm, and he turned about, straining to hear her voice.

"He'll be all right," the nurse said. "Ribs are broken, but nothing else. We can take him out now."

A drama of the tunnel-diggers, by an able writer new to our pages.

by WILBUR S. PEACOCK

Illustrated by Grattan Condon

Angel nodded, smiling now, relief touching his senses. He caught Big Red's gaze, shook his head in mournful sympathy, then laughed aloud at the ironman's sneer of disbelief.

Swinging about, he went toward the face, caught at the shoulders of two men. His boots splashed in the water springing slow, unheard in the racket, from the floor; and the wet fog brushed his face, ran in tiny drops down his cheeks.

"Gimme a hand with Red," he shouted.

He saw that work had stopped for a second, and gave a boxer's hand-shake over his head. Worry lifted from strong faces, and laughter ran dimly through the tunnel from man to man. Angel was glad to be one of them then, for there was something breath-taking and arrogant about such men, still working, still driving forward, while one of them lay, perhaps dying, fifty feet away.

DEATH lay overhead for all of them, a sodden crushing death, which waited but for one mistake to come down in a splintering pounding flood of dirty river water. Frail boards faced the heading where men dug, and forty pounds of air was the back-stop to the boarding. These men were giants, black and white, Senegalese and Irish and Italian and a dozen other races, all working together, each one's life in another's hands.

Angel liked the thought, as he always had; but now he had no time for thinking. With the other men, he gently lifted Big Red, helped carry him up the incline to the locks. Placing the man on a bench, he and Nina sat across the lock, heard the dull thud as the inner lock came closed. For minutes, long interminable minutes they sat, saying nothing, waiting out the long period of decompression.

Impatience touched Angel, but he forced it away. Decompression was a necessary thing, for without it a sandhog got the bends, caisson disease, and his life bubbled away with the compressed nitrogen retained under pressure in his body cells. Unless pressure was built again, and the worker gradually decompressed, he might die horribly in convulsions.

Decompression ceased, and the outer lock swung open. Doctor Bob Barland and two helpers waited outside the man-lock. The Doctor's features were set, and his gaze swung away from Tony and settled on the nurse.



"Hi, beautiful," said Red. The nurse bent and began to work, her hands incredibly gentle.

"How is he, Nina?" he asked.

"Compound fractures of the ribs," the nurse said evenly, tone impersonal. "The muck-car crushed against him. I don't think there are internal injuries."

"Good!" Barland gestured at his helpers. "Bring him to the hospital, and don't be rough."

Angel slipped on a heavy coat, to keep his pores open so that nitrogen could escape easily, then followed the Doctor and nurse to an empty lift. The helpers eased Big Red in beside them, and the cage began to rise. The caisson walls were shiny with sweat, and the sump's cold air was icily chilly. Slowly the electric light faded, and sunlight took its place. Then the cage was stopped at the head of the shaft, and they were moving onto the gantry and down the steps toward the company hospital.

Workers turned and stared, but the tiny procession did not falter.

Big Red was dead weight, unconscious from the hypo Nina had used. He sagged in the helpers' arms. Doctor Bob Barland walked beside him, eyes blank with thought, and at the rear came Nina and Angel, neither speaking, each intent on hidden thoughts.

"Wait here," Doctor Barland said to Angel, and pointed at the small reception-room, when all were in the hospital. "Operating-room, boys," he ordered the helpers.

ANGEL waited, clouding the air with smoke from a battered pipe, pacing the worn linoleum. The minute-hand crept slowly about the face of the wall clock. The small hospital was silent, except for a nurse who several times came wraithlike through the hall and reception-room.

And then a door creaked, and the Doctor paced slowly into sight, face drawn tight with strain, fumbling a light for his cigarette. His gray eyes

flicked to the burly sandhog and then away.

"Red'll be all right," he said evenly. "He's asleep now."

Angel knocked the dottle from his pipe, put it away. Anger ran cold and steady in his mind, and he swung about to face the other.

"He could 'a' died," he said flatly. Barland sighed. "He didn't," he said.

"But he could 'a'!" Angel took a slow step forward. "You get a yellow streak, and won't come down. You might have killed him."

"Look, Angel," Doctor Barland argued, "I can't take the pressure. I've got a heart—"

Angel hit him, throwing the blow clumsily, but with deadly power. Crimson marked the Doctor's mouth; he slumped dazedly against the wall.

"You yellow rat!" Angel's voice was so calm it was unreal. "I'm going to see to it, personally, that you're through here."

Barland pushed himself free of the wall, cigarette smoking unheeded on the floor. He made no move to wipe the blood from his mouth.

They were big men, barrel-chested, Angel dark and Barland blond. Eye to eye they stood and measured each other, and incredulous surprise slowly replaced the rage in Angel's face.

"Then you are yellow!" he said. "I thought maybe—"

"Get out, Angel," Doctor Barland said softly.

He turned, went through a side door, his broad shoulders strangely slumped.

Angel pressed out the smoldering cigarette with the sole of his boot, heard the slight sound at his side. Nina was there, face white, staring at the doorway through which Barland had disappeared.

"You hit him, Angel," she said slowly. "You *hit* him, and he wouldn't fight!"

"Yeah!" Angel shrugged, feeling somehow defeated. He had known Barland and his brother, even worked once with their old man. Never, in those days, would any of them have taken a blow.

He looked up, saw the mistiness in the girl's eyes, and knew then how deep was his affection for her. Anger stirred lazily in him again, that she should care about the man he had just outfaced.

"How about a beer at the Dutchman's?" he said.

Nina nodded, caught a light tan coat from a wall hook; and they went from the hospital, along the street to the steamy saloon.

They found a table at the rear. "Beer," Angel ordered, beginning to relax.

Heavy boots pounded on the floor, and the room was steaming with heat

from radiators along the wall. Men crowded the room, at tables, along the bar, talking, laughing, forgetting for a moment the death they faced each day in the world beneath the river. Some spoke to Angel and the nurse, but most talked with their cronies, while the *slap-slap* of cards from two tables punctuated the speeches. There was tension in the room, a tautness which could flow into action at any moment.

"Is Bob a coward?" Nina asked at last, as she sipped at the foamy glass of fresh beer.

"Yeah!" Angel answered tonelessly. "That heart business is a fake. He got a rough deal ten years ago; his brother was killed in a blow, and he rode a bubble. It busted him like a dynamite charge."

"Rode a bubble?" Nina's voice was puzzled.

Angel nodded, shuddering despite himself.

"The blow caught his brother at the face, and Barland tried to rescue him. The brother was sucked into the face, and Barland was caught ten seconds later. We never found the brother, but Barland rode a bubble of air through the muck and up through the river. The bends almost killed him. After that, he wouldn't enter a tunnel again. Then he disappeared, and I never ran across him again until he showed here as the substitute doc."

"How terrible!" Nina said. "No wonder he's afraid; you'd be, too."

"Maybe!" Angel replied. "I don't know. I been in three blows, and I'm still hogging it." A wry smile pulled his mouth around. "I guess maybe I was right; you're in love with him."

"I guess maybe I am," the girl admitted. "I'm sorry, Angel."

Tony Angelo smiled, but his fists were blocky under the table.

"I'm only sorry about two things," he said. "First, 'cause it wasn't me; and second, 'cause it had to be him." His tone softened. "You're sure?" he finished.

Nina shook her head. "Not completely, Angel," she admitted.

Angel shifted, then finished his beer. "I'll be around, Nina," he said slowly. "You know what I can offer; if it's enough—"

His words trailed away; for the girl was gone, threading through the crowd. Angel watched her go, saw the slow vanishing of a dream. He came to his feet, strode to the bar.

"Rye!" he said; and the bartender stared, for Angel didn't often drink whisky. . . .

"Cut the rope!" somebody said, and the cage began to drop with break-neck speed. Angel leaned against the side, watching the wall whip past, deadness in his mind. Ten days had passed since he had faced Barland in the hospital, and nothing had been

solved. A paper rustled in his pocket, the petition ready for signing by the men for the removal of the Doctor from the hospital. It could be the Doctor's professional death-warrant.

Moist cold pressed at the men, and they crowded closer for warmth. Daylight disappeared, and electric bulbs gleamed yellowly. Seconds later, the cage jarred to a stop at working level, and the men went toward the concrete and steel bulkhead, shedding heavy coats.

Three iron cylinders juttred from the bulkhead. One was the man-lock, the second the muck-lock, through which tunnel debris and equipment passed; and the third was the escape lock, placed as near the roof as possible, the only means of escape, should the face cave and the river come hurtling in a blow.

Angel shivered, touched by the sense of menace, as always, of the solidity of the bulkhead. It made more real the pressing danger of the tunnel beyond. Then he was crowding, with the others, into the man-lock, and the bolt-studded door was thudding shut. Air screamed, and the heat began to build, and the shift had begun.

The pressure was a strangling vise upon the men, and they choked on it at first, then eased and relaxed. Air screamed and howled, as the lock-tender opened the valve wider, and the gauge showed the pressure building up. Then the air's scream began to die, and a second later, the inner lock came open.

Sweat glistened on the men, until they looked as though they were oiled. "All out," the heading boss yelled, and they began to climb from the lock, going silently into the dimness of the tunnel.

Angel tramped quietly along, automatically waving greetings at the shift just leaving. At the heading, he climbed the metal flanges to the working platform, caught a shovel from the hands of a huge Negro.

"How's she going, Jim?" he yelled, and grinned when the black made an okay circle with thumb and forefinger.

"Let's go!" the boss yelled, and men began to work.

AIR screamed a dull bass roar to their effort, giving it a strange weird rhythm, pressing against the hoppers with a solid force like the weight of water deep in a pool. Fog-vapor swirled lazily, twisted by unseen currents, blotting out the men, then shifting and revealing them in their sweating labors. It was a man-made hell of stifling, blinding heat and pressure, a hell where hulking, sweating devils toiled to build a tunnel through which people would some day travel in comfort.

Muck-cars came snaking in and out of the heading, the muckers filling



"You yellow rat!" . . . Angel hit him with deadly power; the Doctor slumped against the wall.

their insatiable maws with swinging lifts of shovels, muscles lifted in bold relief with each movement. Wrenches clanged on iron plates, as the iron gang laid the scales of the man-made monster boring through the earth.

Angel caught up his shovel, grinning at Luigi, his partner, and the muscles tightened in his wide back as he began to work. He swung his weight into each stroke, moving with instinctive ease, the blade slicing cleanly, throwing the sandy muck down past his feet to the muckers. His cut made, he faced the slash with boards, packing the edges with hay, tightening all with a screw-jack.

The noise of the tunnel was a background for his strength, roaring at his ears, but almost unheard, so accustomed had the years made him to it. Other sounds came through—the dull, monotonous singing of the black in Pocket Three, the clatter of the muck-car just coming to rest. He swung about now and then, unconsciously, checking the work of the face, then bent again to his task.

He wiped the sweat from his face, grinned at his partner, worked again. There was something good in such labor; it made a man feel that he was accomplishing something in the building of a world. He could not think of anything else he would have chosen as his life.

He hummed as he worked, slashing with the shovel, facing and jacking

boards into place, doing each thing with precise infinite skill. He could have worked blind, his fingers and nerves telling him the things to do. And around him men worked with the same speed and ability, a team of big-chested sweating giants, challenging the earth with their laughing strength. . . .

And then came that eerie whistling, keening a dirge to the hoppers, rising to a crescendo of sound which tore at ever-taut nerves with plucking icy fingers.

"Blow!" somebody screamed. "It's a blow!"

"Dear Mother of God!" Tony Angelo whispered, and turned.

THE cry spread like flame in grass, blanched faces, caught men in mid-stride and sent them hurtling down the tunnel toward the bulkhead. Fear rose and held the men in thrall, touching all, building until panic lay but seconds away.

Angel squirmed along the platform, saw that Pocket Three had blown; sand was piling about the feet of the Negro in the pocket. It was melting from the face like dust before wind, sliding dirty and gray-brown, fading with fantastic speed, while a whirling vacuum bored a hole in the face.

The Negro fought the blow, white teeth clamped tight in his sweating face, thrusting hay and boards into the sucking maw, trying to stem the

gushing air. The air screamed in a drunken saraband of horror, in the keening pitch only tunnels knew. It surged into the face's break, thickening like milk through the tunnel from lowering pressure.

"Run for it!" somebody bellowed, and other men slipped from the face, leaving Angel and the Negro to fight alone.

Angel grinned at the black, and they moved in close unison, air piling against sweaty backs, tugging at them, drawing them into the face. They pulled against the suction, fed bags of hay and flimsy boards to its hunger.

Muscles lifted in bold relief as they worked, and there was a strength in them that could not be denied. On them rested the lives of the tunnel crew; on their puny efforts lay the respite the others needed to gain the safety of the escape-lock.

"Hol!" Angel bellowed his battle cry, caught up leaning boards.

They shriveled and faded like sugar in water, vanished into the whirlpool spreading over the face. Bags held momentarily, then sucked with fluid speed into the ruptured face, vanishing instantly. Air roared and clamored for their lives, and they struggled like the giants they were, fighting a losing battle. Thick muck moved past them into the tunnel like dirty mush, spreading, utterly dangerous.

"Hold it!" Angel cried, and dropped to the floor.

He swung stacked boards, bags of hay, hammers, wrenches and picks into eager hands. The Negro had but to lift them, and they were snatched away instantly, the sucking sandy mouth pouting for more.

And then the boards and tools were gone; the air was screaming less insanely now, for the pressure was lower, and the muck piled ever faster.

"Run!" the Negro bellowed, and began to laugh. "I'll hold it back till you get free."

ANGEL laughed then, laughed deep in his heart and chest. This was his fight, his life, and no river on earth could whip him while he still breathed. Turning, he took three long slogging strides through the muck, caught at the first empty muck-car.

Three hundred pounds it weighed, and few men could have lifted it. Angel bent, braced his legs, caught at the rusty metal. He fought the dead weight, felt it stir beneath his strength; then muscles locked in his back and thighs, and he heaved with titanic strength.

The muck-car lifted, balanced, and he staggered with it toward the face. Strain bulged his eyes, and he was half-blind, but the laughter bubbled deep inside. If he lived, and that he would do, this would be a story to top all stories.

He almost fell, and a prayer drifted from his heart. Then he went staggering onward, bent beneath the weight, rallying his strength for the final effort.

He was a dirty sweaty giant then, and his strength was his only hope. Straining, muscles creaking with strain, he lifted the car, caught his breath, then hurled the weight upward.

Air caught it, sucked at it, and with the natural impetus, pulled it soddenly into the break. It stuck, holding, slipping a little, then settled solidly. Without waiting to see the effect, Angel whirled, staggered toward the hay and boards farther back down the tunnel.

But there was no need of his moving now. Men were spilling back into the heading, carrying the material they needed to stop the blow. They worked incredibly fast, packing the face; and slowly pressure began to build again.

And then the air had stopped its abnormal screaming, and only the pulsing wail of its natural flow from the black pipes was to be heard.

Angel leaned against the wall, utterly drained of strength, gasping for breath. Air was like flame in his lungs, and his mouth was dry. He sucked in breath, fighting away a wave of faintness.

Dimly he saw that men were gathered about the Negro, and walked

their way, legs wide apart for support. Crowding through sweaty shoulders, he gagged a bit, seeing the gaping wound in the black's belly.

"Get the Doc," somebody said; and Angel went physically ill. . . . Doctor Barland wouldn't come; he wouldn't step into a tunnel.

"Pick him up," Angel yelled. "We're taking him out."

Hands caught at the Negro, and he screamed once, then fainted. He was like a flopping bag of hay as they carried him to the man-lock. Behind, the work of cleaning up had already started.

"Decompress fast!" Angel snarled at the locktender, slammed the inner lock, dogged it shut.

"Listen, Angel," the locktender said, white-faced, "there's the bends—"

"Fast, God damn it!" Angel said hoarsely. . . .

"Put him down there," Doctor Robert Barland said, indicated a table.

Angel helped place the ruptured body of the Negro on the porcelain table, stepped back. Nina, uniform rustling stiffly, pressed forward, while the Doctor bent at his task. The pungent smell of disinfectants lay like a pall over the room, and the cases of instruments and medicines were chilling to see.

"What happened?" Doctor Barland asked.

"Blow," Angel said succinctly. "We stopped it. Bill got hurt some way; I didn't see it. Is he bad?"

"Bad enough." Barland filled a hypodermic, tilted it, let a drop of fluid break free. "The man may die," he finished unemotionally.

Nina flashed one glance at him, then turned her face away. The sandhogs in the doorway, still mucky from the tunnel, shifted uneasily. Angel nodded, feeling the headache swelling in his skull.

"I figured as much," he said. "That's why I brought him out."

He shifted a bit, weariness sapping his strength.

"I didn't figure you'd come down," he said flatly.

Doctor Barland's hand shook for a moment, then steadied. A flush crept upward from his collar, then slowly faded.

"I see," he said.

He used the hypodermic, then frowned in sudden thought. "Did you wait out decompression?" he finished.

"No," Angel said, and felt the first threads of agony tying about his nerves.

Doctor Barland shivered, stared with blind eyes at the unconscious man on the table, then looked at the men in the doorway.

"Get back to the tunnel," he ordered crisply. "Take compression fast."

"Yes sir," one said, and the doorway was empty, the clatter of boots floating back from the hall.

"Bob!" Nina said, her hand on the Negro's pulse. "He'll die, operation or not, if the bends get him."

"I know," Barland said.

"Gonna let him die, Doc?" Angel said. "Maybe we should go back down in the tunnel; at least he won't die of the bends there."

Doctor Robert Barland straightened, and purpose lay in the planes of his face. Perspiration beaded his forehead, but his tone was unhurried.

"We'll use the pressure caisson," he said. "Nina, bring what's needed; Angel, give me a hand."

Angel was sweating now, feeling the first excruciating knots gathering in his body. Once before had he felt the bends, and he knew no man alive could stand up to the intolerable agonies. His eyes were glazed a bit with pain as he stepped forward, helped lift the wounded man.

They went fast now, going down a side hall, into the room where the decompression tank stood. Like a steam boiler it was, but painted white and sterile, with heavy glass ports inset in the door and sides. Valves and pipes marked one end, with duplicate controls inside. It was here that men took compression again when the caisson disease struck them down.

They entered, laid the Negro on a high bench; and a second later, Nina rolled in an instrument-table. Angel bit his lips to keep from crying out, slumped to a bench. Every nerve and muscle was afire now, and he could barely move.

The Doctor closed the door, twisted a valve. Air pounded into the huge cylinder, built pressure. Heat burgeoned. Barland watched the valve. Lips white, closed it when the pressure was equal to that in the tunnel.

"You all right now?" he asked the sandhog, and Angel nodded, feeling relief stealing through his great body.

Then the Doctor turned away, dipped his hands into a bowl of disinfectant. Nina offered a shining scalpel, and both began to work.

Angel watched, fascinated and repelled. Doctor Barland had heavy muscular hands like his own; yet they moved with a delicacy of purpose which even Nina's could not match. Each finger had an eye, so surely did each move, and never was there a wasteful motion.

IT was jackknife surgery, done under bad conditions; yet there was no faltering, no false move. Crimson stained the instruments and pads, touched the surgeon's hands and arms.

Angel looked away. There was something here beyond him, something he could not explain to himself. He had thought strength the prime

requisite for a man; yet this was a gentleness that was almost feminine, and he sensed that he could be wrong.

The dull pain gone from his body, he moved to the valve, began bleeding the tank. Slowly the pressure went down, until at last it was of normal weight. Standing beside the door, he watched the surgeon finish the job.

And then the Doctor was through, sagging onto a bench, lifting haggard eyes to Angel. His face was white, and his hands trembled.

"He'll live until competent help can be obtained," he said slowly. "I've done what I can here."

Nina sighed tiredly, rinsed her hands. Tears were unshed in her eyes. She sat beside the Doctor, leaned against the wall.

Then Barland was on his feet, stalking Angel. He came forward slowly, lines etched about his mouth, eyes half-closed. He was within a yard of Angel before he spoke.

"I owe you this," he said, and threw his fist like a rocket.

Angel took the blow, rocked under it, then caught the second in his hand. His own right fist cocked, then sagged; and as though that were a signal, the Doctor gasped, dropped as though slugged. . . .

"What—what happened?" Angel asked, staring at the man at his feet.

Nina straightened from beside the Doctor, her tone even and controlled.

"His heart," she said. "He didn't lie; he can't take high air."

TONY ANGELO paced the corridor of the City Hospital, feeling strangely out of place in this home of sickness, sweating in the tight confines of a neat suit. He was freshly shaved, black hair brushed until it gleamed blue-black.

"You can go in now," the nurse said, and he went toward the door of Doctor Barland's room.

Sunlight patterned the floor, and roses made a pink patch of brightness on the stand beside the bed. There was an air of sterility about the room.

"Come in, Angel," Doctor Robert Barland said.

Angel swallowed, came toward the bed. He felt awkward and huge and ill at ease. His voice rasped in his throat, and he swallowed, before trying again to speak.

"I'm sorry, Doc," he said at last. "I was wrong, and I'm sorry as hell." He flushed at the level appraisal in the other's eyes. "I want you to know that."

Barland smiled then, and his teeth were white in the paleness of his face.

"Forget it, Angel," he said. "It's forgotten."

Tony Angelo shifted uneasily, face burning. "I was trying to show you up, I think, before Nina," he said. "I figured you were beating my time, so



They struggled like the giants they were, fighting a losing battle.

I tried to show you up. I'm sorry about that, too."

"So that was it!" Barland said.

Angel turned to go, hesitated at the door. "I'll drop in again later," he finished. "I guess I acted like a louse—but honest, I thought I was right."

"Thanks for telling me, Angel," Doctor Barland said, and friendliness lay deep in his eyes.

Angel closed the door, stood silently in the hall for a second, then went toward the elevators. He felt strangely lost and uncertain, and yet a sense of gladness was in him now.

He stepped into a waiting elevator, saw Nina down the hall, outside Barland's room, just before the door clanged shut. His mobile mouth twisted in a wry smile, and he wondered what the future would be like without her at his side.

Then the elevator was at the ground floor, and he was walking toward the entrance. Sunlight was bright on his face, and he blinked a bit.

People waited at the bus stop, and he eased into the crowd, fumbling for his pipe, sucking absently on the stem. There was a tunnel being bored to the West, he had heard; maybe it could use a good man.

"Excuse me," the girl said at his side.

"Sure," he said automatically, stared incredulously at Nina. "What are you

doing here?" he finished. "I thought you were in the Doc's room."

"I was," Nina admitted, and her bronze hair held sparks of gold from the sunlight.

"Well?"

"Well!"

"Well, are you—I mean, isn't he—" Angel sought for words.

"I was sorry for him," Nina said.

"But I thought he—"

"He thinks I'm a good nurse."

They stood silent for a moment, feeling the wonder build in them. And then Angel had caught her up in the circle of his arms, was laughing in great good merriment at the startled crowd.

"I love you, Nina," he said. "Will you marry me?"

"Of course, you dope," Nina answered.

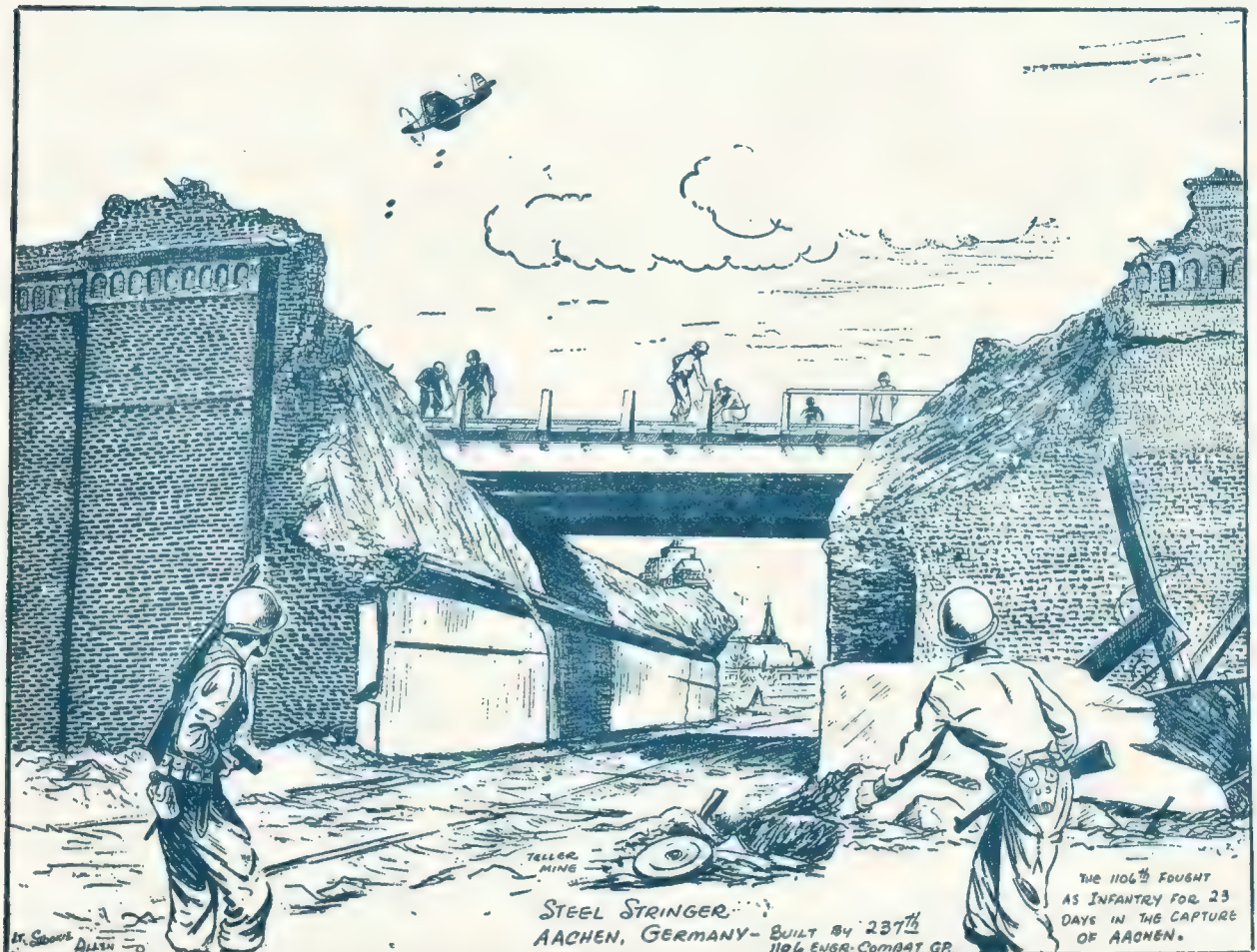
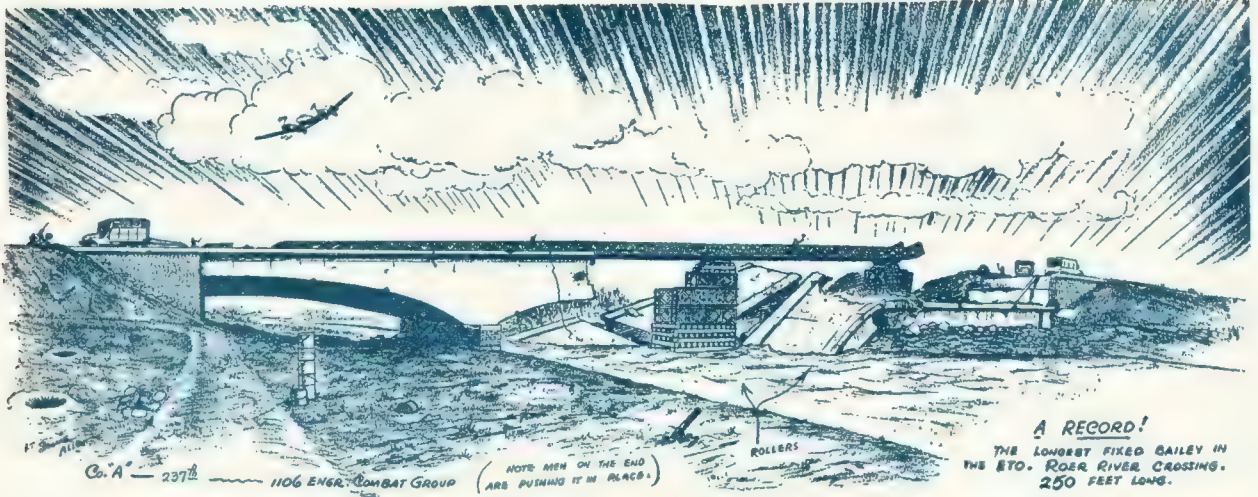
And then the world was far away, and they were alone—while traffic passed, and people smiled at the sight of a great giant of a man kissing the pretty nurse in the crisp starched uniform.

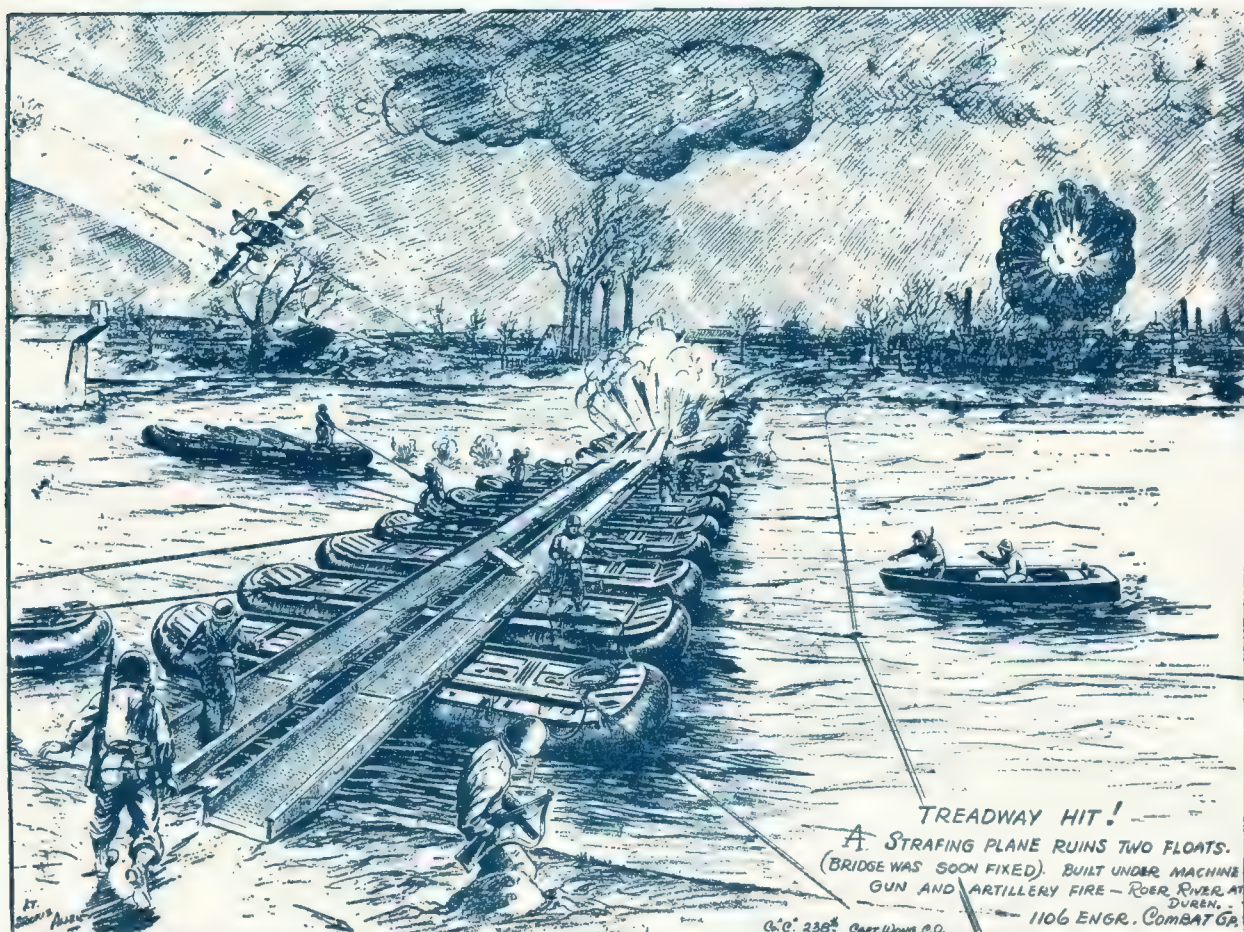
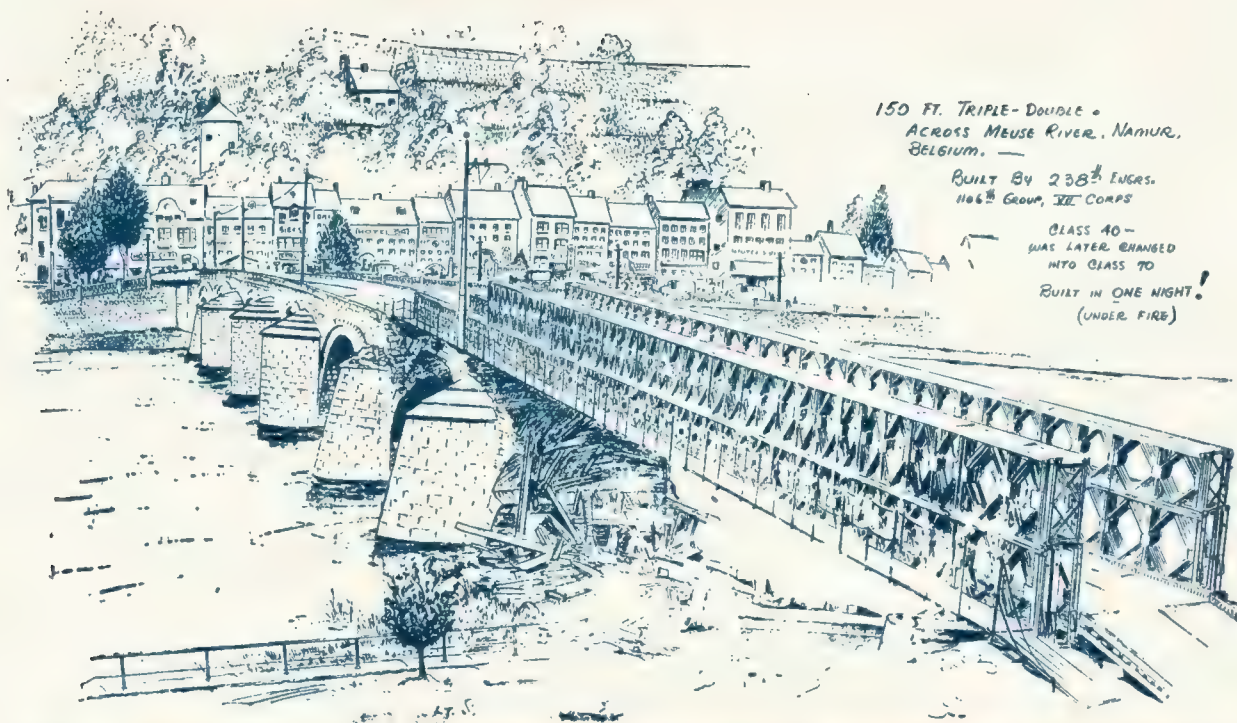
And overhead, watching from the window, Doctor Barland sighed. It must be wonderful, being like that. Some day his chance would come. He hoped, a bit wistfully, the girl for him would have bronze hair and the slightest of dimples at the corner of her mouth.

The Bridge-Builders

On-the-spot drawings by a combat engineer.

by LT. STOOKIE ALLEN





THE
ROER!

INFANTRY SUPPORT BRIDGE
KNOCKED OUT 4 TIMES IN
THE FIRST 25 HOURS. BUILT
UNDER DIRECT ARTILLERY AND
MACHINE GUN FIRE, IN A
TURBULENT RIVER.

GERMANS HAD
OBSERVERS IN THEIR
CHIMNEYS, DIRECTING
THEIR ARTILLERY ON
THE BRIDGE.

LT. STOKES ALLEN
CAPT. SCHLES, C.O.
OF 1106th ENGR. COMBAT GROUP



237th
WORKING ON
By-PASS

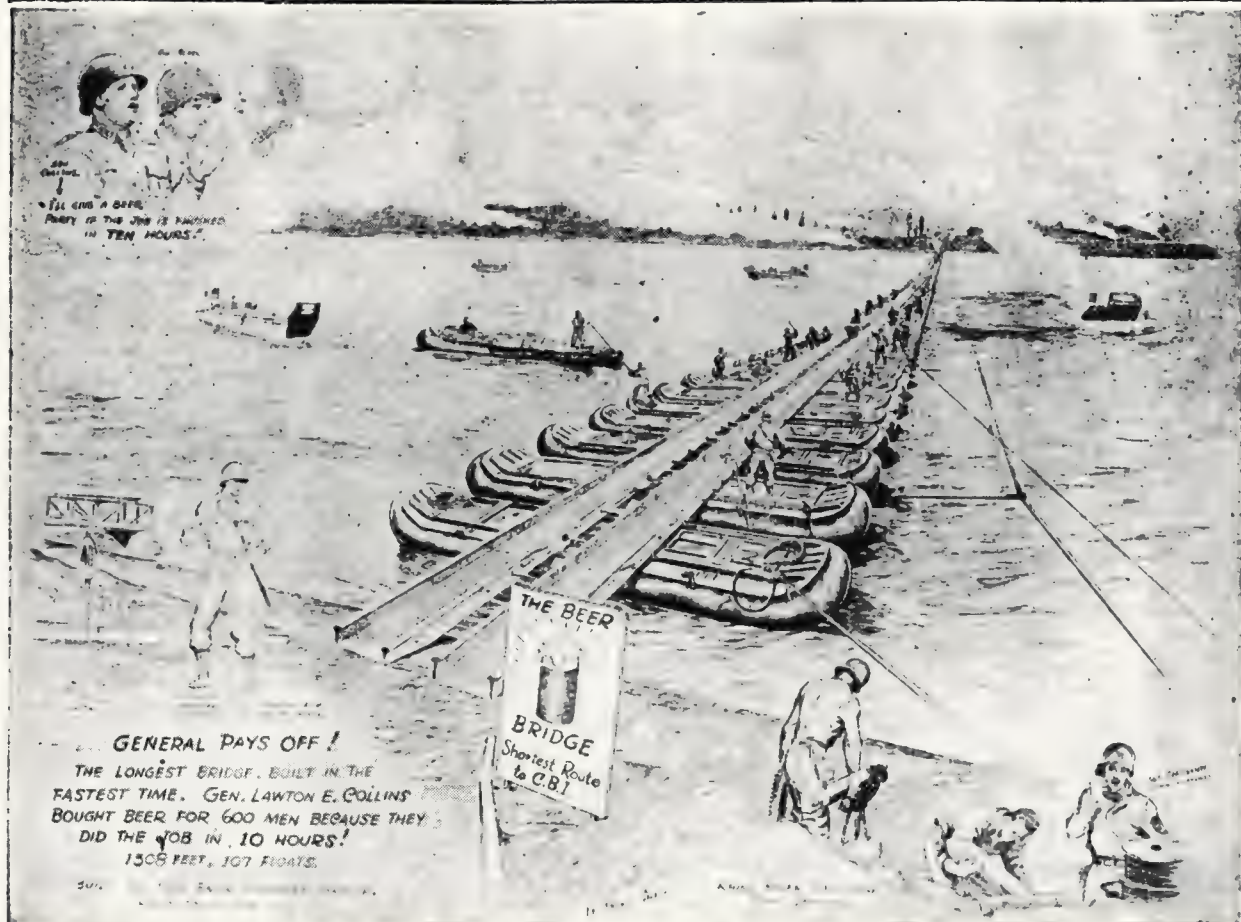
- NORTH OF LEIRNEUX, IN THE
"BATTLE OF THE BULGE."

1106th ENGR. COMBAT GROUP, VII CORPS.

NOTE THE AMERICAN
FLAG PUT UP ON OUR END OF
BRIDGE FLAG WAS MADE BY
SGT BRIDINGER, ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI
MADE FROM TWO LARGE NAZI FLAGS
PLUS A PIECE OF BLUE CLOTH



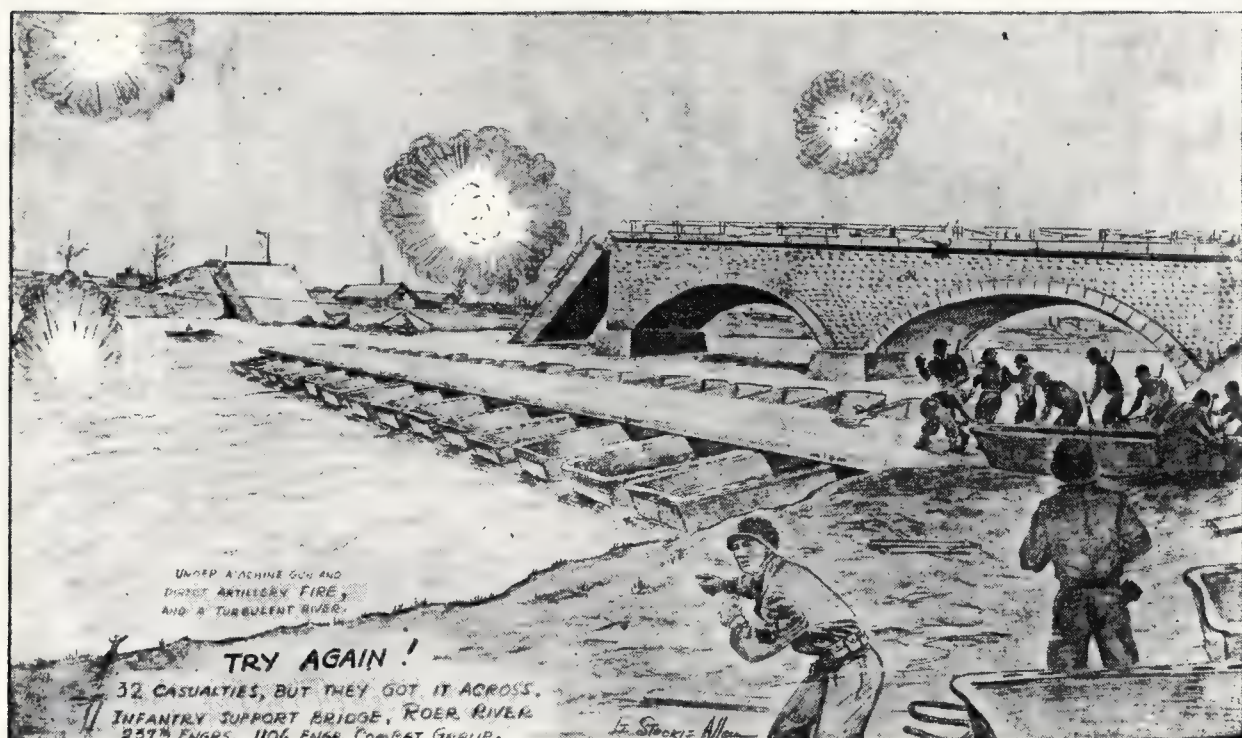
LT. SECKE'S ALLEY
1106 ENGR. COMPANY GROUP

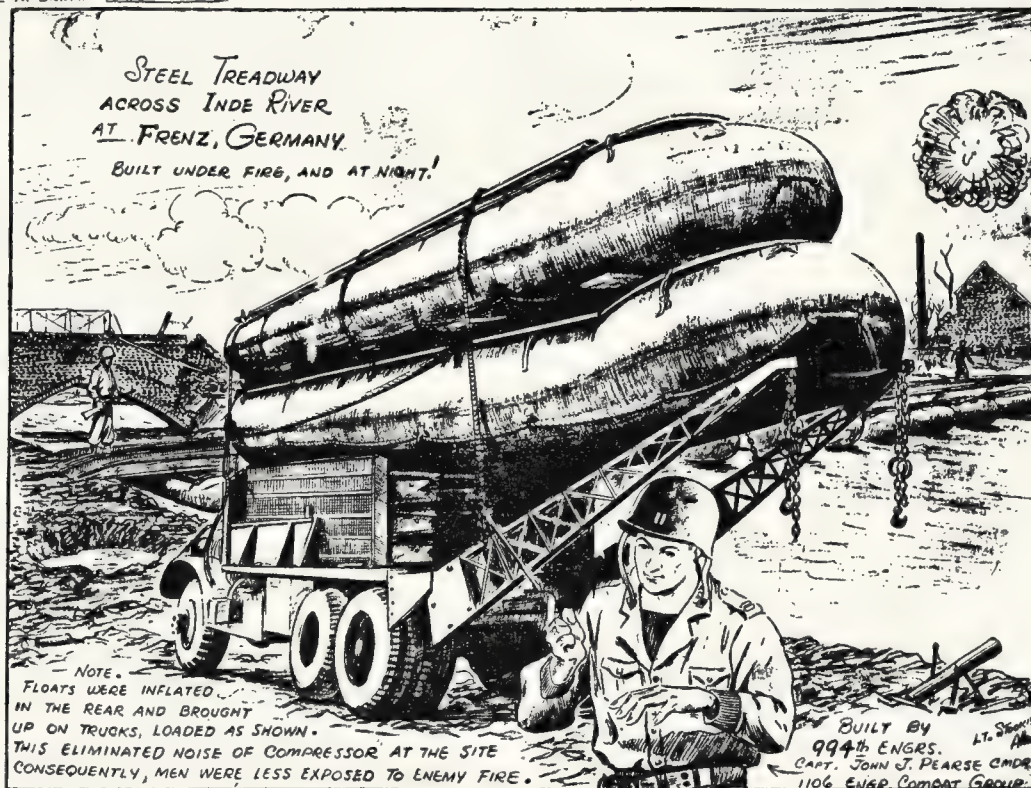
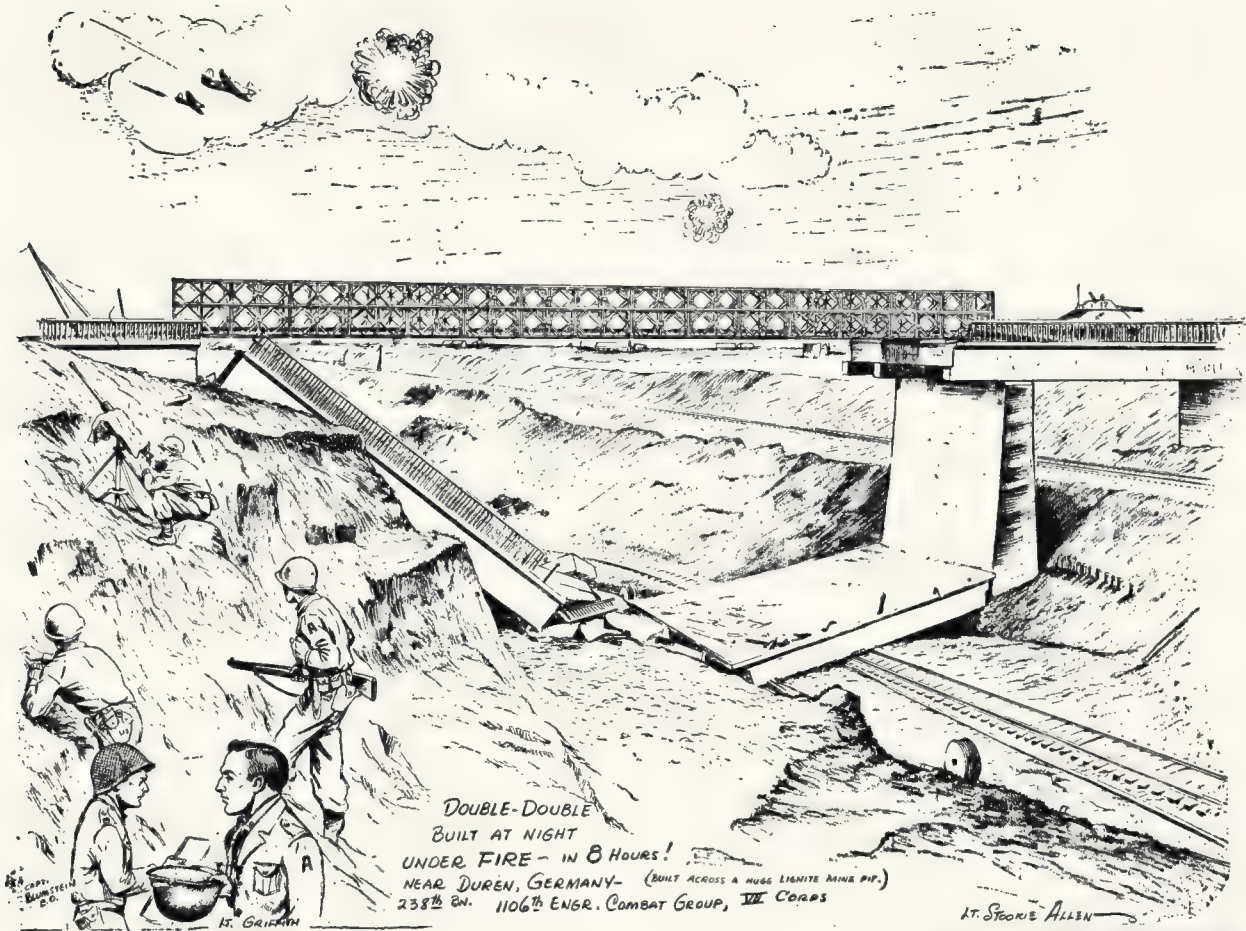


THE BEER
BRIDGE
Shortest Route
to C.B.I.

GENERAL PAYS OFF!

THE LONGEST BRIDGE, BUILT IN THE
FASTEST TIME. GEN. LAWTON E. COLLINS
BOUGHT BEER FOR 600 MEN BECAUSE THEY
DID THE JOB IN 10 HOURS!
1305 FEET, 107 DAYS.





*A memorable drama of sailing-ship days
by the author of "The All's Well Inn"*

by Bill Adams

IT was Monday the ship sailed, at drear-grizzly dawning—the sea bitter cold, lone beyond all telling to a young lad. There were two of us in the apprentices' halfdeck, each green as the grasses of land.

The mate was a silent little man, his expression neither friendly nor unfriendly; speaking only when speech was called for, and then giving orders that brought instant obedience though in his voice was no harshness. He came to my side once when I stood at the wheel, and after maybe a half hour in which was no sound save the sea's slap and the night wind's murmur, he said in a low voice: "The sea's not much of a life for any man. When you've wife and little one ashore, it's a hell of a life." 'Twas the first time ever he spoke to me, except to give an order. Unless to do so, he never spoke to me again, save once only, and that upon a later voyage.

The second mate was a big blustering fellow with the build and voice of a proud young bull. All anyone ever heard from him was orders given loudly in a tone of threat; save that, once in a while, he'd say—the ship motionless on a flat windless sea, in the nighttime always, when my comrade or I passed him on our way to or from the wheel: "What wouldn't I give for a bottle or a woman!"

My comrade and I were less lone than the mates, who according to sea custom must keep their places apart from apprentices, crew, captain, or one another. We had each other. As for the seamen who dwelt in the fore-castle, they were hardened long since to the ways of the sea: rough insensitive men content with one another's company and, at the end of a voyage, two or three days of carousal and jollity ere they again fared forth to the deep.

Captain Gibson resembled a sphinx, an aging lion, or lordly old eagle. With his grizzled hair, lean frame and eyes like gimlets, he seemed as though forever driven by some secret inner urge, distinct and apart from the ever-present urgency of caring for his ship. The first time he saw me he looked right through and beyond me, unaware of my existence. Of what use a green lad on his ship? In the tale of his life I was of less importance than a needless comma inserted by some careless grammarian. Fearing, and because of fear, hating him, we awarded him the contempt of youth impatient of all beyond its understanding.

On Sunday evening, just before two bells—five o'clock and sailor's supper-time—the Chinese steward appeared at our door. Seven days from port, each day overcast, cold and stormy, our hands blistered from hauling on wet salty ropes, our limbs sore from unaccustomed toil, we were disconsolate beyond words, and because of the ship's meager fare, we were hungry as young sharks. And now, speaking pidgin, the old Chinese told us briefly, that the captain's wife wanted one of us at the cabin door.

The captain's wife—a woman aboard the ship! Here was a thing we had not dreamed of. There was, then, some tenderness upon the unkind sea! Our faces brightened, loneliness forgotten. Which should go to the cabin door? The matter was decided by the toss of a coin. Walking aft in the wintry gloom, I sang a lilt of song to myself.

The cabin door opened at the moment I came to it. Lamplight shone out, dazzling my expectant eyes. The dazzle passed; before me stood a woman: Gray face, gray hair close-cropped, gray eyes that stared at me from above thin colorless lips. A bony hand stretched toward me; a smile, so faint as scarce to be a smile—and to me, seemingly satirical—came to a mouth that remained closed. How was I to know the smile was pitying?

"Thank you," said I, since something must, presumably, be said. Her appearance precluded any attempt at further speech; or so, at least, I thought. She stepped back, voiceless, closing the door on me. I was alone in the wintry gloom, in my hand a tin plate on which were two doughnuts. One apiece! I could have wolfed a dozen! No song was on my lips as I returned to my comrade.

"Ma Gibson's bounty!" I sneered, setting the plate down. Blaspheming, we laughed the bitter laughter of youth disillusioned.

NEXT dawning, sea and sky were blue, save that here and there a patch of haze hid the water. With sunrise the haze cleared. Half a mile away, her sails shining in the morning's brightness, a high wave curling at her plunging cutwater, was another ship sailing a course parallel to our own. The captain bellowed an order. The mates repeated it. The crew ran to the ropes.

"Hi-lee! Haul-away—oh! Hi-lee-yo-ho-ho!" roared the chanteyman, all

"Haul-away-oh!" roared the chan-



Wheat

hands hauling together to the long song of it as we tightened every sheet, brace, and halyard. Throughout the morning the two ships raced, neither gaining a foot on her rival.

When I took the wheel at noon, and proud as a young cockerel, held the racing ship on her course, the captain, his wife, and the mate were below at dinner.

"Can ye hold her, son?" demanded the second mate. Eager hands on the wheel spokes, I assured him I could. "See you do, damn ye!" he grunted, and strode off. Aware that he and I were comrades in this high hour, I felt quick affection for the blusterer.

teyman, as we tightened every sheet, brace and halyard. Throughout the morning the two ships raced.



for a Sea Wife

And then Ma Gibson appeared, saw me, swung instantly around, and looking back into the charthouse, called in a questioning, doubtful voice to the captain: "There's one of the green boys at the wheel!"

Captain Gibson was immediately at my side, his eyes fixed now on the compass, now lifted for a moment to watch our speeding rival. After maybe a quarter hour of constant watchfulness he glanced at me, muttered approvingly, "All right, boy," and walked away, leaving his ship in my charge. But till my trick was over, the sea wife stood close by, her gray eyes watching every move I made. I

hated her; what business was it of hers? That she looked at me for a moment when I left the wheel, in her eyes something of approval, made me only detest her the more.

Next day, our rival out of sight astern, we entered the region of the warm tradewind. Paint-pots were brought from their locker; standing beside me or my comrade while we mixed and stirred paint in great drums to be put on bulwarks, deck-houses, masts, boats, and hatch coamings, the sea wife had us change the colors again and again till each was precisely as she desired. The mate seemed to regard her as equal captain

with her husband; this made us despise him. When at times the second mate scowled, we felt kinship with him. Hearing the seamen's coarse jests, spoken when she was out of hearing, we regarded those wastrels as brothers and gave them our admiration. That the captain allowed her full freedom in governing the ship's appearance made us regard him as an old fool. What right had this nigh voiceless, forever watchful, gray-faced woman of the lonely sea to dominate our lives, to direct our labors? Who was there to inform us—and had anyone done so what should we have cared?—that since her wedding-day,

before either of us were born, the ship had been her sole home?

When another Sunday came, the Chinaman again appeared at our door with the same message. My comrade returned from the cabin door with two gingerbread cookies. How were we to know that neither the captain nor his sea wife ate any more of the weekly dainties than did we two? Or that neither mate was served anything beyond the plain fare provided by the opulent shipowner whose servitors we all were? Unaware that since girlhood marriage this woman had been saving every possible penny so that when she and the lover of her youth retired at long last they might have the home of their heart's desire upon the kindly land, we damned her for parsimony, abhorring her as a cold-hearted sea wife in whom all femininity was long since dead.

SO it was till we came to port, after high five months out of sight of land: Sunday by Sunday, either two doughnuts or two gingerbread cookies. Always, whether the ship sailed blue waters beneath a blue sky, or labored in terrific seas raised by the barbarous gales of icy latitudes, the sea wife's watchful eyes were on all things.

It was a small port to which we came: a fishing-village at the mouth of a wide river that flowed into the end of a long strait. We moored the ship beside a fish cannery built upon piles sunk in the muddy bank. Beyond the village were green expanses dotted with clumps of shady trees. Willows grew beside small meandering streams. Bird song was there, from early dawn till past the evening's afterglow. Cottontail rabbits darted; muskrats sported amongst reeds and willow roots. When at work in the rigging, and on the ship's high masts, we could see horses and cattle grazing in belly-deep grass sprinkled with many bright wild flowers. It was a pleasant restful land for the feet of young lads in from the sea to wander in when work was done.

Most of the village dwellings were old and ramshackle, resembling barns rather than homes for human folk. The Chinese who toiled in the cannery inhabited them. The place stank of decaying fish offal dropped through holes in the cannery floor to the mud below. Only when one was well away from the river was the air free from that reek. Then, at the edge of the settlement, neat cottages stood behind painted picket fences within which were gardens. Fragrance of stocks, carnations, honeysuckle, sweet peas, roses, and many other blooms familiar to us in our homes on the world's other side, made the air heavy with sweetness. Here lived the white folk who managed the cannery, the fishermen who caught the fish.

"Look! Look!" exclaimed my comrade, on a sunshiny day just after we came to our moorings; the two of us were at work on the mainmast high above the cannery roof. Following his pointing finger, I saw the sea wife bending above the blossoms of a garden at the edge of the village. The door of the cottage before her opened; a woman of the land came out. In a few minutes the sea wife's arms were full of flowers.

"Get on wi' yer work, ye young devils!" bawled the second mate from the deck a hundred and sixty feet below. We gave no more thought to the sea wife till, as we came down from the mast, she came over the gangway close by. Lifting her face from the blooms in her arms, she regarded us with such a smile as you'd see on the face of a child. The cabin door opened; the captain looked out, and at once to his face came a smile such as you'd see on the face of a young fellow courting his sweetheart. And we, as they went into the cabin and closed its door behind them, grinned one at the other, deriding them for a pair of old simpletons. "Silly old fools!" said I. . . .

Only on Sundays were we able to go far from the ship. On all other days dusk was fallen by the time the day's work of a sailor was done. Rising early on that one day of freedom, we walked far off into the sweet green country, put as much distance as possible between us and the ship whose slaves we were, and returned not till the sky was star-sprinkled.

In a day over three weeks, the loading of the ship was finished. Three Sundays had been ours to roam on the land. On a Saturday night the carpenter put the hatches on and battened them down ready for sea again. We were to start seaward next day at noon, when the tide would be at flood. Having battened the hatches, Chips went into his shop and hammered far into the night. He'd been hammering all day; why must he disturb us now when day was long done? Calling him an old blackguard, we pulled our blankets about our heads, forgot his din, and fell asleep. Tomorrow would be ours till noon, for one last ramble in the sweet green country.

We were mistaken. Fallen late to sleep, we woke late, and were wakened by the mate who ordered us to go to the carpenter's shop and carry from it to the ship's bridge a wooden frame that Chips had completed during the night. What the devil could the thing be, we asked each other, angered with this interference in our morning's plan.

The frame was heavy. It took all our strength to lift it. To carry it up the accommodation ladder to the bridge called for our utmost effort. As we came to the head of the ladder

Ma Gibson appeared, and pointed with an eager gesture to the end of the bridge. No matter how wild the weather, we had never known her to show the least trace of excitement or nervousness at sea. Now it seemed as though she were almost too excited for speech. We carried the frame to the end of the bridge, set it down, lifted it, and set it down again, over and over, till it stood precisely where she wished it to be. Then, turning to the mate, she said, "All right, Mister," and without another word went below to the cabin.

And then, on our last morning of freedom, we must get gunny-sacks and go ashore and fill them with pebbles! We must lug the pebbles up to the bridge and empty them into the frame. And then we must again go ashore and fill the sacks with earth, which we must lug to the bridge and empty upon the pebbles. Six trips we made ashore for earth. Then at last we breathed deep: morning was far gone, but there was still time for a brief walk out to the country. But again we were mistaken.

Once again we must take our sacks ashore, this time out beyond the edge of the village where the horses and cattle grazed. We must fill our sacks with the droppings of animals!

The sight of Ma Gibson approaching, with a smile upon her gray face, as we emptied our sacks' malodorous contents into the accursed frame, filled our young souls with fury and hate. There was no time left in which to go ashore.

FROM the bulwarks my comrade and I watched the captain and sea wife go into and come from their cabin, making trip after trip. Each time they came from it they bore potted plants in their hands. Removing the plants from the pots, setting them out in the earth in the frame, they had the appearance of excited happy children. "Silly old fools!" said we, to one another.

At noon, with a tugboat ahead, the ship started the long tow through the straits to the sea. At dusk the steward came to our door with his weekly message. Handing me the tin plate upon which were the familiar doughnuts, the sea wife smiled—a smile that came slowly, as though born of infinite patience. Her colorless lips parted; words broke from them suddenly, their tones triumphant as those of a child to whom Santa Claus at long last has brought the toy above all others desired.

"I'm going to have a garden!" said Ma Gibson.

Entering the halfdeck I mimicked her words, and we laughed in satirical glee.

Standing out to sea next morning, we met a stiff shifty wind. Again and

again during the day we trimmed the straining sails; the air spray-laden, the ship wildly pitching and rolling; sea and sky desolate, leaden, and chill. By dusk the plants under the glass top of the frame were drooped, as forlorn as the weather. Not till the fourth morning did the sky clear, sea and wind fall, and a warm sun break through the clouds.

"I've got a few left," mournfully murmured the sea wife, eying her garden. For three days she tended those few as though they were orchids beyond price, watering them with cool drinking-water brought fresh from the ship's pump, while because of a sun that grew daily hotter, my comrade and I were called for again and again to change the position of the canvas shade above them. And when on the fourth day—the ship being well into the tropics—those plants from a temperate zone perished in the merciless heat, we grinned at one another. The useless frame would be dismantled now, its earthy contents thrown to the sea. But again we were mistaken.

On top of our halfdeck was a chicken-house wherein dwelt a few scrawny hens. Now and then one would cackle; an egg would be laid—on this ship in midocean. Always the Chinese steward hurried to gather it, lest some hungry sailor forestall him.

"Steward, bring me a handful of the chickens' wheat!" called the sea wife, her eyes bright with new hope.

In a few days green sprouts rose from the earth in the frame. A day or two and they were several inches tall. When we sailed clear of the tropics, the wheat of the sea wife's garden was full two feet high. Glancing down through the cabin skylight one morning, I saw her arranging on the dining-table a vase in which were a few of her treasured stalks. At her side was the captain. He laid a bony hand on her shoulder; she lifted her face to his; he bent toward her and their lips met.

"When we retire you shall have the finest flowers that grow," said the man of the deep sea to his woman. . . .

Meeting a high wind and rough sea next day, we took sail off the ship. By midday a gale was raging; the air was full of stinging salt spray. Unseen in the rush of shortening sail, a heavy rope fell on and smashed the glass cover of the frame. By evening the wheat, its heavy heads just beginning to turn golden, lay bedraggled and broken in salt-impregnated earth. Our eyes meeting, my comrade and I raised our brows, shrugged a little. We were tired of this garden thing—it was no longer amusing; it had become only a bore. And it was finished for good now: the frame would be dismantled at last, its contents thrown to the sea. But once again we were mistaken.



*Illustrated by
Cleveland
Woodward*

*As he fell from that
high rocking spar I
had an instant's
glimpse of the stark
horror in his eyes.*



"There was heart's love back of that small gift she made you lads."

For two days the gale blew. Then, on a windless sea, under a leaden sky, rain fell in a steady torrent, till far into the afternoon.

"It'll wash out the salt," said the sea wife, and when at sunset the rain ceased she called: "I want some more wheat, steward!"

"Is that all you can spare?" she asked, when he dropped a few grains into her cupped hand. It was all he could spare.

The new crop came slowly; the sunless weather was growing daily colder. "If only I could have a few heads of ripe wheat!" murmured the sea wife, sadly eying her few wan sprouts, as my comrade passed by on his way from the wheel to our halfdeck where I sat waiting him. Lighting his pipe, he paused and repeated her words—unsmiling, in dull monotone.

"There'll be no ripe wheat," said I—heedless, uncaring, bored by a stale old tale. And when, a few days later, with snow flying, the sprouts perished, and we dismantled the frame and threw its contents to the equally uncaring sea, it was as when one closes a tedious book and lays it forever aside. . . .

Come to voyage's end, we two went for a brief while to our homes. When

we rejoined the ship, the captain and his wife were gone, retired at last. We sailed again with the silent mate for our captain, the blusterer for mate, a new second mate, carpenter, steward, and crew, so that the ship was as a new ship, a different ship. And we also were different; no longer green, we were grown hard now, and were proud of that hardihood. A pair of fine young cockerels, we were: eager and strong, full of youth's lustiness, and with pride in our calling. The world was our own, and often we talked of the day when we should be captains of fine ships. Speaking of that first voyage, we joked about our old captain's adoration of his gray-faced sea wife; of her weekly "bounty," and her futile longing for a garden on the flowerless sea.

Two more long voyages my comrade and I made together, and part of a third. The way it came to be but a part of that third was this:

A gale was blowing, snowflakes driving on a screaming wind, spray flying in clouds across the rolling decks. In the thick of the fury we two were high aloft upon the swaying mainmast, frapping tight a sail that the fierce wind had worked loose from its lashings. Shouting defiantly, we pit-

ted our young strength against the elements' ferocity. And when at last the sail was secured, and we were about to start down to the foamy deck a hundred and forty feet below, my comrade, holding with one hand to the rigging, slapped the other hard on my shoulder, and laughing, cried above the gale's mad uproar: "How'd you like some of Ma Gibson's bounty now?"

A grin on my lips, I shouted back: "If only I could have a few heads of ripe wheat!"

And then there was a yell of terror from my comrade; and as he fell from that high racking spar I had an instant's glimpse of the stark terror in his eyes.

You cannot put a boat out in a sea such as was that sea. For a few moments the dark dot of his head bobbed in the wild swirls of the ship's wake; then I was alone.

And that night, the wind fallen, and a few weak stars gleaming through the cloud rifts, the blustering mate, looking in upon me where I sat solitary in the halfdeck we so long had shared, said, his bulging eyes on my white face: "He'd ha' made a good man wi' some o' the cocksureness taken out o' him. The same holds for you, son!" And then he was gone into the gloom.

And in that dark part of the night that comes just ere dawning, the ship now motionless as a monolith upon a mirror-flat sea, someone came and stood close by me where I stood with my hands upon the idle wheel. Until he spoke, I thought it was the blusterer. "The sea's not much of a life for any man. When you've wife and little one ashore, it's a hell of a life."

After a moment the captain, who on that first voyage had been the mate, continued: "I could have my woman with me, like Gibson did; but there's too many chances on the sea. A fine man Gibson was, and his wife was a fine woman. Lord, how she used to eat her heart out wanting to be a bit motherly to you lads who were so green and lonesome! I used to envy you two, with your little dainties every Sunday. 'Twas no more than a taste, but 'twas as much as she and her man ever had for themselves. I mind how she said to me the first Sunday after we sailed, 'Mr. Mate, I'd like to fix a little treat for you and the second mate; but I've awful little flour to last the voyage, and there's those two hungry little youngsters in the halfdeck.' There was heart's love back of that small gift she made you lads. Mighty lucky you were, sailing with such a woman in the ship!"

He had but finished speaking when a tiny air fanned our faces, and the blusterer's voice rang out, calling to his watch: "Check in the braces, lads, and let's be on the way home!"

And as the ship glided forward, and the first streak of dawn showed on the eastern horizon, and the captain walked away, I looked backward to those drear seas 'neath which my comrade lay, and wishing he'd been there to hear what the captain had said to me, I felt lonelier than ever I had felt.

TEN years were gone by. The sea was empty now of those winged ships in which I'd learned the sailor's proud calling. To and fro along the deep passed only throbbing steamers with their smoky plumes and smell of oil and soot. And because the sea no longer was a sea for such as me, I was ashore. Now I had wife and child and, in a measure, was content enough.

I'd dream, tho—by night sometimes and often daydreaming—of voyages past, but oftener of that first. I'd see my grizzled captain, and his sea wife's face; I'd remember the potted plants I'd watched them set out in her small midsea garden. Snatches of talk would come to me from down the years—the voices of the Captain and his wife: *"I'm going to have a garden."* . . . *"When we retire, you shall have the finest flowers that grow."* . . . *"If only I could have a few heads of ripe wheat!"*

I'd remember my young comrade's end, and the blusterer's words that night, and those spoken by the quiet mate of my first voyage on that still midocean morning just as the dawn came; then the voice of the blusterer would ring again, "Check in the braces, lads, and let's be on the way home!"

One day my woman said to me, "You're restless for the sea," and I made no answer. "It's funny," she continued, "you behave just as you used to before we had the mortgage paid, and were so much in debt." And when I still made no answer, she asked, "It isn't really that you owe money to someone without my knowing about it, is it?"

"No, I don't owe anyone money," said I, and went out and paced to and fro among the flowerbeds my woman had planted.

It was a day or two later that, standing midst her flowers, reading the paper a lad had just tossed over the fence, she called to me: "What was the name of that captain you first went to sea with?" When I told her the name she said:

"His wife's dead. Did you know they lived so near us?"

I took the paper from her, and having seen the notice of the sea wife's death in the city four hundred miles away I thought, "God, no! If only I'd known!" And I said to my woman, "I've got to go to my captain."

"I'll pick you some flowers," said

my woman. "I'll make you a wreath for her."

But I said, "No," for it was summer and very hot, and the long drive up the valley in which was our home would leave the flowers wilted. "I'll buy a wreath when I get to the city," I told her.

A still cloudless day, it was, with mirages shimmering in oven-hot air. All day I drove, looking straight ahead, as looks the sailor glimpsing at long last the beckon of a lighthouse on the shores of home. Come at sunset to the head of the valley, I seemed almost to scent my sea once more, and hear its windy murmur. A little while now, and I'd see my captain again. Then about to turn into a gap leading through the coast's low hills, I was aware of the sun's last rays gleaming on a field of ripe wheat at the roadside.

By this field I stopped, and climbed through the fence, and eagerly I gathered stalks of heavy-headed golden wheat, and with the quick fingers of a sailor weaving rope, I wove a wreath for the sea wife.

Then soon I was at the door of my captain's home; a nurse woman opened to my rap, and I said to her: "I sailed long ago with Captain and Mrs. Gibson."

"You'd like to see Mrs. Gibson?" she inquired, low-voiced, and she gestured to a room close by, the door of which was open. In the center of that

room was a casket, and on the top of it and all about the room were wreaths, crosses, and anchors of all manner of fine flowers from gardens and hothouses.

"No, I want to see my captain," said I, and she took me along a hall, and through another door; there before me, surrounded by friends of the shore, sat my captain.

His hair was snow white, his frame shrunken away, his face more lined than ever. Seeing me dimly through tears, he rose and stepped hesitatingly toward me. Then, recognizing me, he turned to those friends of the shore and cried, within his voice a strong ring of pride and of gladness:

"It's one of my boys! *One of my boys of the old ship, come to be with me now!"*

He took my strong young hand in his old withered one, and I held up my wreath for him to see. "Come, boy!" said my captain, and while none other moved, he leaned on my arm, and we went together to that other room. Here he moved from upon the casket all those rich blooms and in place of them laid upon it, alone, my wreath of ripe wheat.

And when next day I sat at my old captain's side, and at the head of a lengthy procession of shore friends we slowly followed her casket, no flower went with Ma Gibson to her long watch below—save only my wreath of ripe wheat.

When Was It?

A Quiz

by DOW RICHARDSON

IT would be embarrassing—now, wouldn't it?—to have lived through the greatest of all wars and not know, if someone asked you, what happened on August 14, 1945. For a quick refresher, here's a basic list of important World War II dates you should not forget.

Seven correct answers is a high score. Do better than that and you're alive to the history-making age in which you're living.

1. June 6, 1944.
2. August 6, 1945.
3. December 7, 1941.
4. November 8, 1942.
5. August 14, 1945.
6. September 1, 1939.
7. May 7, 1945.
8. June 22, 1941.

9. September 2, 1945.
10. June 24, 1940.

Answers to WHEN WAS IT?

1. Allies landed in France.
2. First atomic bomb dropped, at Hiroshima.
3. Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.
4. Allies landed in North Africa.
5. War with Japan ended.
6. Germany invaded Poland.
7. V-E Day. Germany surrendered.
8. Germany invaded Russia.
9. Japanese signed surrender terms in Tokyo Bay.
10. France accepted German-Italian peace terms.

Sad Sam and Teddy the Bear

THE SURPRISING SAGA OF A HORSE WITH A SENSE
OF HUMOR AND A BEAR THAT TOOK TO DRINK.

by GEORGE H. DAUGHERTY, JR.



SAD SAM was a horse. Old Dan Chivers, who had a ranch near Laramie, owned him. Sam was a cow-pony originally, but he was big—sixteen hands; and likely he had thoroughbred blood in him, because he sure had a lot of speed—when he felt like it. Trouble was, he was temperamental, sort of moody at times, and then he wouldn't run. He was a mud-colored gray, with one onion eye; just about the homeliest horse you ever saw. He seemed to know it too, and maybe that's why he looked so gloomy.

However, Sam wasn't sad all the time, although his expression never changed. He did have a sense of humor, which he might have got from Chivers. One thing he liked to do was sneak up and snatch with his teeth the hats off of people who didn't know him, and then step on the hats. Sometimes he'd treat the hats worse than that. Once he ruined a twenty-dollar Stetson of mine that way.

Chivers claimed he could always tell when Sam was feeling perky; and then if there was a race anywhere around, he'd enter Sam and win big money, because Sam's handgog looks always caused the odds to be heavy against him. Once in a while, though, Sam would have a sudden gloomy relapse just before a race, and Chivers would lose plenty.

Teddy, the bear, belonged to my boss Bill Jasper, who owned the garage in Fort Collins, and a ranch up on the Poudre River. Dan and Bill had been together in their young days in Elliott Brothers Wild West Show. Dan was the star rider and roper, and Bill did trick shooting, and an act with trained bears. Bill Jasper certainly had a way with animals. Seemed like he could fairly hypnotize 'em, and make 'em love him; and he liked them at least as well as he did his best friends. He kept a lot of tame deer and elk and other animals, and also birds up at his ranch, until it was like a regular game preserve. Then he fixed up the window of the garage with iron bars to make two big cages, and put a mountain lion he'd tamed in one, and a couple of bear-cubs in the other. They certainly provided a lot of advertising and publicity, and we had the biggest garage business in northeast Colorado.

One of those bear-cubs was Teddy. He was a cinnamon, the smartest bear I ever heard of. Bill taught him a lot of tricks, but the ones he thought up on his own were even better. One

night rather late, when Bill and his wife were away from home at a party, Teddy got the whole town up when he managed to get hold of that lion's tail. Seems Teddy gnawed a hole in the wooden partition between the bears' cage and the lion's. By accident the lion stuck her tail through the hole; and Teddy and Millie, the other cub, started playing tug-of-war with it. The lion screamed and brought the night man at the garage and then the police on the run, but Jasper was the only one who had the keys to the cage, so they couldn't get in and make the bear-cubs let go.

The fire department also came, and then a whole crowd of citizens. That lion sure was throwing a fit, and screaming like a woman being murdered, but she couldn't get her tail away from the cubs, who had it in their teeth and claws, and were chewing it to a frazzle. The fire department were about to smash the plate-glass window and poke the cubs through the iron bars of their cage, when Jasper finally showed up with the keys and stopped the fracas. He licked Teddy good, and spent the rest



*Illustrated
by Charles
Chickering*

*Madame screamed
fit to bust your ears
and tore out of the
tent, yelling: "The
devil's in there!
Help!"*

of the night trying to soothe the lion, who was having a nervous breakdown.

After the other cub died, Teddy was his favorite, and when he grew up, Jasper took him everywhere just like a dog, or rather like a friend. He even taught Teddy to drink whisky out of a bottle, and sometimes they'd have a picnic out of town, and both get slightly under the influence together. Teddy worshiped Jasper, but he often caused him embarrassment. Like the time Jasper drove the tow car out on a rep ir call on Sunday morning just as churches let out.

Teddy was riding along in back as he often did. Jasper noticed that lots of the churchgoers were laughing and pointing at him, and some looked outraged. Finally he turned around, to find Teddy guzzling from a quart bottle of whisky that Jasper had stuck in a pocket of the car and forgot. Members of the Fort Collins W.C.T.U. tried to have Jasper arrested for contributing to the delinquency of a dumb animal who was also a minor. Jasper

got out of it by pleading that Teddy was of age—for a bear; and certainly was not a *dumb* animal.

What I was going to tell about, though, was the horse-race at the Laramie fair. Jasper decided to go up and see his old friend Chivers, and he invited me along. Of course Teddy went too, with a collar and chain. The town was full of ranchers and stockmen, but when we pulled up at the Custer Hotel in Laramie about eleven A.M., the first one we saw was Chivers with his white mustache and chin-whiskers all bristled out as they always were when he was excited.

"Bill," he yelps. "I've been waitin' for you. Quick—lend me twenty-five dollars to make up the rest of this last bet I'm placin' on Sad Sam to win the free-for-all this afternoon. The odds are fifteen to one, and I've put up every cent. There's still some money floatin' around in the hotel lobby, so let me introduce you to it. Put yer roll on Sad Sam today, my boy. He's a winner; we'll all be rich tonight!"

"How do you know he's a winner today?" says Jasper. "Remember, a year ago he quit half through the race, and I lost the wholesale price of a new Chevvy?"

"There's no mistake today," replies Dan. "He snatched the hats off three dudes who was tourin' the stables, and nearly bit the ear off one of them. Besides, he even *looks* happy. He can't help but win!"

Well, we left Teddy in the car, and put up some money on Sam, bettin' with various sports Dan introduced us to, and deposited the stakes with the hotel cashier. Then Dan insisted we go to the stables and see the horse for ourselves. "Boys, if you don't agree after one look at him that Sam is in the winningest mood of his whole life, you still have time to go to the hotel and cancel your bets," says Chivers.

When we got out to the fairgrounds, there was the usual crowd at the stables. "Sam's stall is clear down at the end," says Dan. "Too bad we have to go so slow through this crowd, because we won't have any too much time for lunch."

As he said, we had to drive real slow through all that mob of jockeys and visitors. The horses, of course, were all in their stalls. When we finally got to where Dan said Sam's stall was, the old man suddenly hopped out. "Wait a second, till I come back," he says, and disappears. Then he was back again a-running. "Boys, I'm sorry. Sam's been moved to the barn at the other end, and I forgot it. We'll have to go back."

WE drove back through the crowd, slower than ever, to the other end of the stables. Then Dan jumped out again, telling us to wait. He came back quicker than before. "Boys, this is a mix-up. My stableboy's put Sam clear at the other end of this barn, and there's an awful jam in there. You know you can take my word for it that Sam is feelin' right today, and that's more'n we'll be if we don't get a drink and a bite to eat."

Jasper looked suspicious at this, and I had a hollow feeling 'at wasn't all from hunger. We'd visited the bar while we were at the hotel, and I'd

got so optimistic myself that I'd put up most of my roll of a hundred on Sam. However, there didn't seem much we could do by that time, except eat, so we drove away without seeing Sam, after all. It was two-thirty when we got to our places in the grandstand, feeling considerable better, account of having visited the bar both before and after lunch. We'd almost come to believe Dan's tale of how spry old Sam was that day, and so didn't mind missing the first couple of races. Jasper and I managed to win two or three small bets on the intervening events, and so were right cheerful when the horses were led out for the "Three-quarter-mile Free-for-all."

"Look at them horses!" said Jasper. "Old Sam's goin' to have some competition." And we began to have misgivings. Fifteen horses were led out, the liveliest I ever did see, rearing and prancing, and going every which way. The jockeys could hardly hold them. "Where is Sam?" I queried, feeling worse and worse.

Teddy jumped on the wooden horse, and away he went, round and round.



"Don't you worry about Sam," says Chivers. "He'll show 'em all up today. There he comes now."

Sure enough, there came Sam at last, sadder than ever, plodding along as if to his own funeral. "Chivers, you've done us in again. So help me, I'll collect all my bets out of your hide," groans Jasper. "Just look at the old crow-bait."

The other horses were acting so wild, they could hardly be forced to the barrier. The start had to be delayed four times before they would line up. Meantime Sam sort of slid into a place, fourth from the rail. That was the only cheering thing, and it looked like an accident. Finally, they were all in line for about a second, and the starter jerked the rubber barrier. Some of those ponies were so wild they turned clear around before they got started, and two of 'em

actually went the wrong way. The others, though, got the jump on Sam, who fell behind next the rail.

Then things began to go wrong with that race again. Those horses crowded each other. Some of 'em bucked their jockeys off, and others kicked and bit, and some dashed diagonally across the track. One jumped the fence like a steeple-chaser and scattered the crowd. Old Sam just loped along, still trailing until the half, and paying no attention to the circus going on around him and in front.

"Now's the time, boy! Give him the works!" screams Dan, just as if his jockey could hear him through the howling from the stands. But it almost seemed the jockey, or Sam, did

hear him, for Sam pricked up his ears and stretched himself out. Next thing he was passing the one horse who seemed to have any running sense left, and was tearing in a winner by three lengths.

And there we were, rich men. "I don't know how he done it," gasps my boss, passing his bottle, "but to-night we celebrate. Let's get Teddy. He deserves a share of this too."

We found Teddy chained in the car at the parking lot where we'd left him in spite of the attendant's violent objections. Jasper gave the bear a drink, and the four of us walked up to the Hotel Custer, being the objects of considerable interest all along the way. When we'd collected our bets, Dan paid Jasper the twenty-five dollars and said: "Gentlemen, this here is the crowning day of Sam's and my career. This calls for something extra special. There is a carnival in town, and I move we take it over."

On the way, he stopped at a liquor store and came out with a gunnysack of bottled beer, a gunnysack of wine,

First thing, we bought four tickets for the merry-go-round, and nearly had to fight the ticket man who tried to keep Teddy off a bay-colored wooden horse. In the end, Teddy offered the guy a bottle of beer, and before he could recover from the surprise, Teddy jumped on the horse, and away he went, around and around, drinking the health of the crowd. The cheers were deafening.

He gave a kind of terrified squawk and threw both arms around Jasper, and tried to hide his head under the boss' vest. He squeezed him so tight he nearly broke Jasper's ribs, and the crowd thought Bill's struggle to get loose was the best part of the show. The operator kept the wheel stationary for an extra long time so everybody could see it. Bill was half dead when we got down, and Teddy was cold sober again.

While we waited, we all had another drink, and then Madame's customer came out. He was a real dark colored fellow, but when he saw Teddy, he turned sort of grayish like a faded sock, his jaw dropped, and he dived under the side of the tent: but we didn't hear him holler until he'd got some distance away. Then he sure whooped.

out of a crystal ball on the table in front of the fortune-teller, who sat behind it, looking very mysterious all muffled up in a dark cloak. She didn't see us at first, because she had her hands over both eyes.

Without a word, Bill pushes Teddy into the chair, and Teddy sticks out his paw. Then the Madame took her hands off her eyes and started to grab the paw. When she saw it and looked up at Teddy's face, her eyes bugged out, and her mouth fell open nearly as wide as Teddy's. She wasn't like the colored customer, though. She screamed right then, fit to bust your ears, and jumped, and tore the whole back out of the tent. We heard her running away, and yelling: "The devil's in there! Help! Help! My God!"

"All right, boys, since no harm's been done," said the sergeant, "but get the hell out of town with that bear." Dan and Bill said they had their bags at the hotel, so alter we gave 'em one of the whisky bottles, the cops turned us loose to go back to the Custer House.

About that time another old rancher, a pal of Chivers and Jasper, came up and begged the loan of the bear. "That bar inside is so jammed," he complained, "that an honest cattleman can't get to it. Now, if I had Teddy to open the way for me, I could do somethin' about this consumin' thirst." Bill allowed he could borrow Teddy for five minutes if he'd throw a dollar on the drum, which he did, and took Teddy inside. Meantime, considering the jam at the bar, we stayed outside and refreshed ourselves with what was left in the gunnysacks we still carried.

WE didn't have any trouble reaching the mahogany, because everybody was in the corners of the place and behind the tables, and some were under the tables. There on the bar was Teddy. He'd knocked over most of the glasses and had his nose buried in a stein of beer. He was all over foam, and certainly was soused to the eyes. Bill Jasper dragged him down off the bar and started to take him out, when the manager came running in, and they began a big argument.

Next thing I knew it was morning, and I had a terrible headache, and something awful hairy was resting on my face. I thought it must be Teddy in bed with me, and I rolled onto the floor with a yell. It wasn't Teddy,

though—only Bill Jasper, who was snoring away, with his head under my chin. Dan Chivers sat up in the other bed, looking like a dissipated Santa Claus. We all got up; and to tell the truth, the world didn't look so bright.

After breakfast, we paid our bill and a sizable claim for Teddy's breakage in the bar, and started out for the garage owned by a friend of Bill's, where Dan and Bill recalled having chained Teddy for the night. We all felt a bit somber, and more so when we heard a hullabaloo from inside the garage before we ever opened the door. An ornery-looking citizen was dancing around the garage floor and swearing a streak at Teddy, who'd crawled out of Dan's car. The length of his chain allowed him to reach the next car, and Teddy's hang-over must have made him feel like biting something, for he'd chewed a front tire all to pieces. It was a new tire, too, and of course Bill had to pay for it, or the owner could have called in the police.

"Suppose you come down to my ranch," Bill said to him. "I think we all need a rest after this, and I'd like to show you some more of my pets." "Devil take you and your pets!" said Dan; but after we'd had a drink out of a bottle left in Bill's car, he felt better and agreed to come after he'd telephoned his jockey at the stables to carry Sad Sam home in his horse-trailer.

Meantime, Bill and I went out and loaded a couple cases of whisky, because Colorado was dry in those days, and everybody at Fort Collins used to stock up whenever they came to Laramie. We put the whisky in the back seat and covered it up with a rug. I sat in the back, too, and Bill insisted on putting Teddy in with me, no matter what I said. "If he was good enough for you to drink with yesterday, he's good enough to ride in the back seat with you today," said Bill. He was my boss, so I had to accept Teddy, who I'll admit was acting very subdued and orderly.

I must have gone to sleep right away, because I woke up feeling suffocated by a terrible weight; and when I opened my eyes, I couldn't see a thing. I thought I must be dead and buried, and tried to yell for help, when Teddy rolled off my chest. He'd merely gone to sleep on top of me. Then I realized the car had stopped and another argument was going on.

This time it was two Colorado State highway police, demanding that we let 'em search the car for liquor. We aint got a thing to drink in the car," old Chivers was hollering. "Well, you've sure got plenty on your breath," says the police. "Let's see what you've got there in the back seat." With that, he stuck his mug in the rear door,

and Teddy roused up and nearly bit him on the nose. The police fell over backward, when Teddy hung out over the door and shook his paw at them. "See. No liquor. Just a nice gentle bear," says Bill. "For God's sake, take your menagerie out of here," yelled the police, and got back on their motorcycles. We shoved along.

Before we got home, I tapped Dan Chivers and asked him something that had been bothering me in my lucid intervals ever since the race. "Dan, how come all those horses acted so wild in the free-for-all, yesterday? Some of 'em might never have been on a track before, but it was amazing that all fifteen carried on that way. Looked like good horses, too. Old Sam ran all right, but he wasn't setting any records, at that. What got into those horses, anyway?"

"Well, boys, now we're out of Wyoming, I guess I can let you into a little secret," replied Chivers. "I knew where Sam was stabled all the time, and I purposely delayed starting for the stables until pretty late. I knew Bill, here, would have Teddy along, and we'd have to drive real slow through that crowd at the paddock, and then back again. Those horses inside their stables couldn't see Teddy, but they could *smell* a bear, and it nearly drove 'em wild.

"If you'd been listening, you could have heard 'em kicking and squealing inside. They went crazy when we went by the first time, and crazier when we came back the same way. Old Sam, way over in the big barn at the end, never smelled Teddy, and so he wasn't bothered at all. The rest of the field ran their race before they ever left the paddock. That's what happened, boys, and we owe our present state of prosperity, in spite of a few unavoidable expenses, to Teddy, as well as Sam. What say we stop and give the bear a drink right now? I reckon he needs it, and so do we." And that's what we did.



Father of Baseball

IF, as Wellington said, the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing-fields of Eton, how many victories were sired on the diamonds of America! It is singularly appropriate that the father of so many American military triumphs (achieved and yet to come) was a professional soldier.

On June 26, 1819, Abner Doubleday was born in a New York State community that fittingly had the name of Ballston Spa. The lad was of Huguenot origin; at one time the name had been spelled "Dubaldy." He bore the name of a grandfather who had fought in the Revolutionary War at Bunker Hill and Stony Point, after which he was captured and sent to the notorious prison ship *Jersey*, which perversely transferred his affections to Naval life after his release. Young Abner was the son of Hester and Ulysses Freeman Doubleday; his father, a small-town editor, was to spend four years as a Democratic Congressman.

The boy attended school at Auburn and Cooperstown, New York. He was preparing for a career as a civil engineer; but he was able to obtain an appointment to West Point in 1838, and thereafter he was a soldier—with certain mental characteristics of the engineer.

In the spring of 1839, Cadet Doubleday spent a vacation in Cooperstown with his old school friends. The chaotic nature of the ball games they played disturbed the methodical mind of the West Pointer. From ten to thirty or more persons played a game that was a hodgepodge of one-old-cat, rounders, and other sports—with innumerable variations. The games stretched over an undefined area of ground, and collisions of players were frequent, involving players on the same team who had no clearly designated sections to patrol as well as players in different but overlapping games. The more virile athletes played a game that retired the batter or runner by hitting ("burning") him with the ball; often the "retirement" was more than nominal.

One day, at a game on the old Phinney pasture in Cooperstown, the methodical Doubleday outlined in the dirt an approximation of the now-familiar diamond layout, indicating the locations of the players, at that time limited to eleven men per side. He also sketched a memorandum of rules for this new game, which he called baseball, as the field consisted

Abner Doubleday, a cadet at West Point devised our modern game in 1839 while on vacation at Cooperstown, N. Y. Later he commanded the hopeless defense of Fort Sumter at the start of the Civil War; as Major General at Gettysburg he had two horses shot under him.

by **ROBERT S.
HOLZMAN**

of four bases (including home base). It cannot be said that the regulated game was instantly an unqualified success; but the youths of Cooperstown played it on the militia lot, Mr. Bennett's field south of Otsego Academy, or in the Miller's Bay neighborhood. Doubleday himself was a catcher.

Doubleday returned to West Point after his vacation, and on July 1, 1842, he was graduated from the United States Military Academy. His graduation rank was Number 24 in a class of 56, and among his classmates who were to rise to high military station were (in academic order) John Newton, William S. Rosecrans, John Pope, D. H. Hill, and James Longstreet.

The same year, the new game reached New York City, and a lot on East 27th Street was utilized, precisely where the first Madison Square Garden was subsequently to be erected. In common with other new Nineteenth Century sports, it was at first the private property of the wealthy amateur gentlemen exclusively.

In this year, Doubleday was breveted a second lieutenant in the Third Artillery. He served in the garrison at Fort Johnston, North Carolina, from 1842 to 1844; at historic Fort McHenry (of "The Star Spangled Banner" fame) in 1844; and at Fort Moultrie, South Carolina, in 1844 and 1845. Fellow-members of this regiment were the future Generals John F. Reynolds, William T. Sherman and George Thomas (later called the "Rock of Chickamauga").

In 1845, Doubleday received his permanent commission as second lieutenant in the First Artillery. In the same year, Alexander J. Cartwright of New York formed the first baseball club, the Knickerbockers. The club practiced on a lot in the Murray Hill section of New York City, but soon found a more

idyllic spot in the Elysian Fields, Hoboken, New Jersey. The first inter-club game was played on that field on June 19, 1846, when the New York Club defeated the Knickerbockers, 21-1, in a 4-inning game: in that day, 21 runs ("aces") constituted a contest, handball-manner.

Doubleday was promoted to first lieutenant on March 3, 1847. The following year, he participated in the Mexican War with General Taylor's army and saw service in the battles of Monterey and Buena Vista.

Baseball grew slowly but steadily. In 1850, the Washington Club was formed in New York, and on June 3 of the following year this team challenged the pioneer Knickerbockers, who beat the upstarts from Yorkville, 21-11, in eight innings. The Knickerbockers created a sensation by appearing in uniforms—blue long trousers, white shirts, and straw hats. The Knickerbockers also won a return match two weeks later, 22-20, in the first ten-inning game.

On July 16, 1853, the New York *Clipper* printed the first tabular box-score, covering a game played eleven days previously, when the Knickerbockers defeated the Gothams, 21-12.

On March 3, 1855, Doubleday was promoted to captain in the First Artillery, eight years to the day after his promotion to first lieutenant.

January 22, 1857, saw the first baseball convention, with twenty-five clubs represented. The National Association of Baseball Players was formed, and various improvements were suggested. One of these innovations was seen on July 20, 1858, when a fifty-cent admission fee was charged for a Manhattan-versus-Brooklyn match played at the Fashion race-course on Long Island. In those days, Manhattan played a better brand of ball, or so the score indicated: 22-18. Captain Doubleday could not be present, as he was then engaged in a more desperate contest with the Seminole Indians in Florida.

In 1860, the first baseball tour took place, the Brooklyn Excelsiors making a successful trip through New York State. Again Captain Doubleday had more pressing business, for after a two-year leave, he was now assigned to Fort Moultrie in Charleston Harbor.

Doubleday found himself on a powder-keg in Charleston, figuratively and almost literally. The full fury of the Civil War was about to burst. Of the three Federal forts in the harbor, Cas-

tle Pinckney was so unprotected as to be useless, Fort Sumter was unfinished and unoccupied, and Fort Moultrie was exposed to small-arms fire from houses on Sullivan's Island. Moultrie was merely a sea battery; "no one ever imagined it would be attacked by our own people," wrote Doubleday, "and if assailed by foreigners, it was supposed that an army of citizen-soldiers would be there to defend it." As war neared, Secretary of War John B. Floyd (later a Confederate general) had \$150,000 appropriated for strengthening Fort Moultrie and \$80,000 for Fort Sumter, on the pretext that war with England was imminent over a Mexican incident; but as no troop reinforcements were sent to the forts, it was obvious that Floyd wanted these forts available for the Confederates with no excess personnel to be disposed of. The garrisons of the Charleston forts should have been 1050 men; instead, they remained at sixty-five soldiers, and a brass band.

Major Robert Anderson of Kentucky commanded the forts, with Doubleday the senior commander. So vulnerable was old Fort Moultrie (Major Anderson's father had served there in the Revolutionary War) that attack by patriotic Charlestonians was constantly expected, and guards were posted continuously. Long guard duty became so onerous that the wives of Doubleday and of Captain Truman Seymour even took relief tours of duty. It was painfully obvious that few could survive a formal attack, but Doubleday stoically noted that, "it did not greatly concern us, since that risk was merely a part of our business, and we intended to make the best fight we could." Doubleday proposed burning down the houses that overlooked the fort, but Anderson vetoed the idea.

On December 26, 1860, the garrison was suddenly evacuated to Fort Sumter while the Charleston militia was taking its siesta. The unfinished fort had plenty of guns, but little equipment and few defenders. There was no illumination the first night; the following day, Mrs. Doubleday brought a supply of candles to Sumter's island. The women were then transported back North; the defenders prepared for attack, and the long waiting period began.

Just after dawn on January 9, 1861, Doubleday saw the *Star of the West*, a large ship sent by the Federal authorities with troop and matériel reinforcements. The Southern forces at Fort Moultrie fired on the ship, which at once withdrew; and the garrison knew that it was isolated.

The incoming President realized that Fort Sumter's loss would be a great blow to Northern prestige, and only a few days after his inaugural, Lincoln determined to learn the pos-

sibilities of its holding out. Doubleday recorded: "My wife, who was in Washington, was very much surprised at receiving a call from the President. He came quietly to request her to show him my letters from Fort Sumter, so that he might form a better opinion as to the condition of affairs there, more particularly in regard to our resources."

On April 12, 1861, the Southern forces began an intensive bombardment of Fort Sumter. Captain Doubleday personally aimed the first gun fired in reply, the initial Union gun fired in the Civil War. His aim was good, but the shot "bounded off from the sloping side of the [ironclad] battery opposite without producing any apparent effect." The Union defenders fought back gallantly but hopelessly. Powder-bags soon ran out; flannel shirts and Major Anderson's socks were filled with powder to discharge the three ten-inch columbiads. The garrison artillerymen were greatly aided in aiming their cannon by a mechanism devised by Doubleday: in the leisurely days before the bombardment, he had painted a white vertical line on each gun breech, which could then be readily moved to conform to the angle elevations of various predetermined objectives as marked on a rod set next to each gun. Food ran out on April 14, and the garrison surrendered, under terms which provided transportation back to New York on the S.S. *Baltic*.

FROM April 19 to June 3, Doubleday served at Fort Hancock, New York, where he received his major's commission on May 14. He then saw service in the Shenandoah Valley for several months, returning to Washington to command a battery. Here he remained until May, 1862, and made a number of acquaintances in the capital, including the President. On February 3, 1862, he was made a brigadier-general of volunteers, for a short time commanding all the Washington defenses. There followed service in the field, and on November 29, 1862, he was promoted to major-general of volunteers. Doubleday participated in the battles of Bull Run (second), Antietam, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.

Doubleday showed himself to be quiet and cool in time of stress; he was stolid and steady in an unspectacular way. Observers noted that he was distinguished in appearance and that he was dignified and courteous in manner. His retentive memory was legendary. Unlike other generals of that day, he was not addicted to liquor or tobacco, and he was never known to swear. His men may not have approved of his habit of reciting poetry while on the march.

Baseball was far from forgotten in this period. Colonel A. G. Mills (later President of the National League) has written how he packed bat and ball as part of his standard equipment, and more men learned the game in the Army than ever before. On December 15, 1862, the team of Duryea's Zouaves played an all-star aggregation of other soldiers before forty thousand spectators at Hilton Head, South Carolina.

On July 1, 1863, the Confederate vanguard made contact with Union cavalry under General Buford, and the battle of Gettysburg started. General Reynolds, commanding the three Union corps on the scene, gave the First Corps to Doubleday; when Reynolds was killed, Doubleday took over the full Federal command for many invaluable hours during the first day's fighting. Finally, when his men were forced back under tremendous odds, they retired in good order to a position on Cemetery Ridge which was held throughout the engagement. His corps lost two-thirds of its men, but he held his lines. Wrote Doubleday: "We lay on our arms that night among the tombs at Gettysburg, so suggestive of the shortness of life and the nothingness of fame; but the men were little disposed to moralize on themes like these and were much too exhausted to think of anything but much-needed rest."

Despite Doubleday's priceless service that first day of battle, the Army commander, General Meade, took away the First Corps and gave it to an engineer general who was junior to Doubleday: John Newton, who had been Number Two man in his West Point class. Doubleday returned to command his division, greatly humiliated by this action by his superior who had not even been present on the field; but he performed further distinguished service, and he participated in the bloody repulse of Pickett's charge on the third day of the battle, losing two horses which were shot under him in that afternoon's fighting. In describing the charge to the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War, Doubleday concluded: "Thus the day was won, and the country saved."

Doubleday was again at Gettysburg when President Lincoln came to dedicate the National Cemetery. His wife was also acquainted with the Lincolns by now and often appeared as part of the Presidential entourage at visits to hospitals and fairs.

Doubleday's later war service was of noncombatant nature. From the end of 1863 until August 24, 1865, he served on courts-martial and various special commissions, although he was temporarily given command of the southeastern defenses of Washington, when General Early threatened that

city in July, 1864. He was breveted colonel in the Regular Army on March 11, 1865; two days later he was commissioned brigadier- and major-general in the Regular Army "for gallant and meritorious services during the Rebellion."

The end of the war gave baseball tremendous impetus. The men who had learned the game in camp or prison brought the sport back to their home communities, and for the first time, baseball took on the characteristics of a truly national pastime. By 1865, there were a hundred baseball clubs. In 1869, the first admittedly professional team was formed—the Cincinnati Red Stockings, who ran up a string of fifty-six victories and one tie game.

That same year, General Doubleday left his work at the Freedmen's Bureau and the Retiring Board in Washington, to take his new assignment as Recruiting Service General Supervisor in San Francisco. The following year, he suggested the first cable street-railway in the United States and obtained a charter for it. Baseball was being widely played in California at this time, for Alexander Cartwright, who had done so much to popularize the game in New York City, had moved out during the "gold rush" of '49.

On March 4th, 1871, the National Association of Professional Baseball Players was formed with ten member clubs.

General Doubleday retired from active service on December 11, 1873, and spent most of his remaining years in and around New York. For many years he was a member of the New York Stock Exchange.

The National League of Professional Baseball Clubs was organized in 1875, and baseball had now come into its own. Regular leagues were formed; stability was lent to the game by a permanent organization; and writers devoted their talents to describing the games and their heroes.

Doubleday maintained his intelligent interest in many things as long as he lived. In his later years he took up chess; the problems of position had always fascinated him, as was shown by his invention of baseball and by his defense at Gettysburg. He took up French and Spanish literature and, shortly before his death, Sanskrit. On January 26, 1893, he died at his home in Mendham, New Jersey, and was buried in the National Cemetery at Arlington.

Now that baseball was at the zenith of the sports heaven, considerable popular question was raised to as who was

the true author of the game. Doubleday had his advocates, but so did Alexander Cartwright, the writer Henry Chadwick, and others. The General had never made any particular reference to his claim; a cousin, Robert Doubleday, said: "Abner Doubleday invented baseball and Bismarck invented the herring. But both, apparently, thought it beneath their dignity to say so."

Accordingly, A. G. Spalding appointed a commission in 1906 to reach a definite conclusion after a survey of all the evidence. The seven-man commission included two United States Senators, the President of the Amateur Athletic Union, and several one-time Presidents of the National League; its qualifications were unquestioned. Its findings were:

"First—That Baseball had its origin in the United States.

"Second—That the first scheme for playing it, according to the evidence obtainable to date, was devised by Abner Doubleday, Cooperstown, New York, in 1839."

A hundred years after that date, a centennial celebration was held in Cooperstown, and on the original cowpasture where Doubleday had made his discovery, a fine baseball diamond was created by the W. P. A.

EIGHT Chinese draftees arrived at Reception Center the day after I had landed there, and were assigned to beds on either side of me. They were eager, willing chaps, but understood not a word of English, and so the laconic demonstration in the fine art of military bed-making delivered by a very bored corporal went completely over their heads. Next morning they were up two hours before reveille, trying collectively to unravel the mysteries of hospital corners and military folds.

In self-defense I undertook to show these Oriental eager-beavers how to make up their beds. I gathered them all around me while I made up my own bed, explaining at each step, "Me do—you do, savvy?"

They were quick to catch, and in no time at all were able to make up their beds in G.I. fashion. I felt pretty well pleased with myself—at least I'd have a little more sleep in the morning.

That afternoon, after the Chinese boys had been processed, the group was in formation waiting to be broken up into drill platoons and fatigue details. The sergeant pulled the Chinese lads out of ranks and motioned for me to step forward.

"You're a bright boy, soldier," he said. "I saw how you handled these babies this morning. Now you take 'em down to supply, and get 'em each a grass-cutter, then take 'em down in

My Most Amusing Experience

(Conditions governing contributions to the department are the same as for the "What Do You Think?" section. See page 35)

back of the service club an' mow them weeds. Bring 'em back at 1530."

I was pretty chesty, marching my detail across the road to the service club. I had them in a column of twos, and about half of them in step. They weren't much to look at in their ill-fitting fatigues and their far-from-military bearing, but I was as proud of them as a mother with her firstborn. My first command!

At the field of operations I spread my boys out in a line, took a grass-cutter and swung it, walking forward as I did so. "Me do," I barked. I returned the grass-cutter to the boy I'd taken it from. "You do!" I shouted.

It worked! Eight grass-cutter blades sliced into the weeds as one, and on the backstroke each man took a step forward. It was pretty to watch, but the shade of a nearby tree beckoned, so I sat down under it to rest.

Here I was but two days in the Army, and already my sterling worth had been recognized! I was modestly accepting master sergeant's stripes when I fell asleep.

And there's where the sergeant found me when he went looking for the missing detail. He awakened me with somewhat less than gentle consideration for my feelings.

I jumped to my feet and looked wildly for my detail. I saw eight grass-cutters lying in a neat row at the edge of a ten-foot swath; and flat on their backs in the shade of the service club, my eager-beavers sent a drone of celestial snoring to the summer breeze.

I shoved past the sergeant and dashed among them, yanking them upright and shouting. They stood blinking at me sheepishly.

"You — — so and so's!" I yelled. "What the hell's the idea of going to sleep on me?"

They shuffled their feet and looked uncomfortably at each other, and then one of them pointed to me.

"You do," he said then, inclining his head, closing his eyes and giving a good imitation of a snore. Then he and his seven brothers in arms grinned broadly and tapped themselves on the chest. "Me do," they chorused cheerfully.

Yes, those boys were very quick to catch on.

W. R. Marsden.

Highlights of the war history of the battleship *Washington*, which had her bad luck on her first voyage, when the admiral commanding was lost overboard. After that she came through her share of action with hardly a scratch.

by Lt. PATRICK VINCENT

LUCKY



On the 27th of March, 1942, the first U.S. Task Force to leave for the European theater of war pulled out of Casco Bay. This armada under command of Rear Admiral Wilcox consisted of the battleship *Washington*, the carrier *Wasp*, two heavy cruisers—*Tuscaloosa* and *Wichita*—and six destroyers: *Wainwright*, *Lang*, *Mayrant*, *Rowan*, *Wilson* and *Sterrett*. The signal blinkers of the rest of the ships in the harbor were busy as they signaled us all good luck. As we passed through the submarine nets, the personnel on the tenders yelled and waved across the space of twenty yards that separated us. The task force formed up as it left the bay and soon the rocky coast of Maine was but a thin dark line on the horizon.

The brightness of the day changed into a leaden hue, and before long the wind was whipping off the tops of the mounting waves. With the dropping of the barometer and the increasing winds the destroyers with us began to pitch violently, and even the old "Washtub" herself began to buck. Over the speaker system came the word:

"Now hear this! Cover over all hatches, lash down all loose gear. Prepare ship for heavy weather." A storm was upon us. With a thunderous booming the waves soon sent solid green water sweeping down the decks, ripping out stanchions and gun-shields in its path. Two planes on the catapults were smashed completely and had to be thrown overboard. Numerous doors and hatches were sprung, and no longer watertight, let the water in to slosh around below deck. For three days we fought our way eastward through the storm.

Late afternoon of the third day, when the waves were subsiding but still high, we were startled by the cry "Man overboard!" Momentarily the throb of the engines stopped, and the ship was swung to avoid mangling the unlucky sailor in its wake. Astern of us, destroyers which had seen the Man Overboard signal searched the area.

Assembly was blown on the bugle, and all of the crew not on watch went to quarters for muster to find out the name of the missing man. With faces showing anguish, the petty officers called the roll. The results as reported by the division officers were tallied up; the count, which showed no absentees, was reported to the executive officer.

"Somebody has a false muster," stormed the executive officer. "We have a man over the side, and you report no absentees! Now go back and take another muster!" The process was started again, and after a thorough check, the muster of the ship's company still showed no absentees. This was reported again to the executive officer. He fussed and fumed, but the Captain was on the bridge waiting, and so he reported the results of the muster to him. Then it was mild-mannered Captain Benson's turn to become angry. However, the commander assured him that two musters had already been taken, both of which had showed no one of the crew had gone over the side. The Captain calmed down and resignedly went off to make his report to Admiral Wilcox.

Retreat from quarters was sounded, and we all gathered in the wardroom for a cigarette and a cup of coffee. Presently Lieutenant Platt, the junior Marine officer, hurried into the wardroom.

"Has the Admiral been through here?" he asked of the relaxed officers. The answer was no, and Platt went on

his way. Several times the Marine orderlies of the Captain and the executive officer peered into the wardroom. They too were looking for the Admiral.

"Somebody is going to catch hell over those musters," said Fargo thoughtfully. Platt came into the wardroom and over to the table where we were sitting. In a low voice he said confidentially:

"My God! We can't find the Admiral."

"You don't think *he* was the one?" asked Fargo incredulously.

"I don't know," answered Platt, "but the Admiral's orderly hasn't been able to find him since ten minutes before the man was reported overboard. And we have been looking ever since. They're going to pass the word for the Admiral in a few minutes." We still could not make ourselves believe or even think that the Admiral could be missing.

In a few minutes the word was passed and then passed again awhile later. The Admiral was nowhere to be found. The search went on, but to no avail; and soon it was acknowledged that the Admiral had been lost over the side. The officers and crew of the *Washington* were stunned. It was unbelievable, amazing.

Admiral Wilcox had come on board with his staff only a week before we had left Portland. Hardly anyone had seen much of him during his brief stay on board. Like the executive officer and Captain, he had a Marine orderly whose orders were to stay with the Admiral and serve as aide and messenger. The afternoon of his disappearance the Admiral had wandered aft along the main deck, apparently to take a look at the catapults, which had been pounded considerably by the sea. Somehow the Marine orderly had not noticed the Admiral's departure from his cabin, and alone the Admiral stood on the main deck aft. As he was washed over the side, the only person to see him was a member of one of the five-inch directors on watch. He noticed that the man going over was in a khaki uniform and bald. Consequently at first it was thought that it was either a Marine or an officer.

The quick-thinking men in the director immediately put their optics on the man in the rough, icy-cold sea and tracked him so that they could help in the search when the destroyers tried to pick him up.

Astern of us the *Tuscaloosa*, noticing our "Man overboard" signal kept a sharp look-out, and when they saw the Admiral struggling for his life in the water, bracketed him with two ring-buoys. When last seen, the Admiral was swimming toward one of them. But he was never picked up. Destroyers searched the spot for hours, but the man chosen to lead our task force was gone. . . .

Early next morning Rear Admiral Giffin, affectionately called "Alkali Ike" by his shipmates, took charge of the task force from the heavy cruiser *Wichita*. Through calming seas we plowed eastward closer to our destination, which we learned was Scapa Flow, which is in the Orkney Islands at the northern tip of Scotland. In 1918 a force of U.S. battleships had joined the British Home Fleet there for purposes of maintaining a blockade on crumbling Germany. Also the remains of the German Grand Fleet had steamed into the flow at the conclusion of World War I and had been scuttled by their own crews. In World War II Gunther Prien, commanding a German U boat, had penetrated the thick

MAN-of-WAR

defenses of the British naval base, and in one of the most daring exploits of the war, had sunk a British battleship and escaped. Several times during our crossing we were to have met and passed large convoys. But apparently the havoc of the storm had either delayed them or driven them off their course. Not so, however, with the Third Reich's submarines. At twelve-thirty one night the officers and crew of the *Washington* were brought out of their bunks by the ringing of the general alarm and the call "General quarters." All battle stations were manned in the fastest time that we had ever made. As I ran to my new station in the fire-control tower, I could hear the sound of firing in the distance and the occasional jar of depth-charges dropped close aboard. The formations executed a few emergency turns, increased speed, and soon left the marauders astern. What the score was in our brush with the submarines I never knew, but none of our ships was damaged and we continued on our way.

(After many months' not uneventful service in the Atlantic, the Washington was shifted to the Pacific area and made the long voyage via the Panama Canal. We pick up Lt. Vincent's chronicle with the campaign in the Solomons.)

In the Solomons almost daily skirmishes between light U. S. and Japanese units were the opening phase of the final decisive battle. In spite of cheering headlines, our forces on Guadalcanal were hard pressed. Jap naval power was at flood tide, and the *Kirishima* plus five other battleships hovering near the island served grim notice that the Japs meant to drive our forces there into the sea. The time was nearing for the final showdown battle in the Solomons.

At eight o'clock, October 7, 1942, we heaved anchor and left the calm deep blue waters of the quiet harbor and sleepy village behind as we headed west toward the embattled Solomons. After several days' steaming we slowed temporarily to fuel the destroyers accompanying us before entering the Coral Sea. On the fourth day out we rendezvoused with three destroyers, two transports bearing Army troops, and the light cruiser *Atlanta*. After a short time spent in organizing the task force, we headed north toward the eastern tip of Guadalcanal.

THE NIGHT BEFORE THE TRANSPORTS we were escorting reached their destination, we heard the first good news in a month of the fighting around the Solomons. A task force of five U. S. cruisers surprised an equal force of Jap warships coming down at night to bombard Marine positions on Guadalcanal. The tables were turned on the Japs and they were caught as our "sitting duck" cruisers were caught in the first few days of the invasion. In the darkness off Savo Island our cruisers crept to within range of the Japs and then opened up before the Japs knew that they had ever been stalked. In the fierce battle the fitful orange and red flashes of the guns were visible for miles as the American cruisers and destroyers hammered the surprised Japs. With telling effect our guns and torpedoes soon sank or silenced the main part of the Japanese force.

The U.S.S. *Boise* turned on her searchlights and swept the horizon looking for more enemy ships. Lying off to one side unnoticed was a Japanese cruiser that had been damaged slightly in the mêlée. Using the *Boise's* searchlights as a point of aim, she commenced firing, and with-

in a few seconds had mulled the cruiser several times with shells penetrating to the magazines of the forward turrets. Although the *Boise* was in sinking condition, the rest of our force pounced on the Jap and sent him to the bottom. During the heat of the engagement the destroyer *Duncan* pressed toward the Jap battle so closely that she was caught by our own cruisers' devastating fire and sunk.

In the erratic maneuvering done by both sides as they jockeyed for better firing positions, one of the Jap destroyers became confused and fell in with our formation, mistakenly thinking it was theirs. When our ships discovered the enemy ship in their midst they all opened fire simultaneously. One of our cruisers' high turrets was depressed so low in an attempt to pour shells into the close-lying Jap destroyer's hull, that when it fired, it blew the periscope off one of the lower turrets. Caught in a hail of shells, the Jap ship disintegrated.

The firing became desultory and eventually ceased when our ships lost contact with the broken remnants of the Jap force that fled northward into the night. This was the first time that our surface units had engaged and decisively defeated the Japs. It was believed that two, possibly three Jap cruisers and four Jap destroyers had gone down in the same waters that held four of our sunken cruisers. However the *Boise* and *Salt Lake City* had paid a terrible price in dead and wounded, though they still remained afloat, and the gallant destroyer *Duncan* was lost.

The next night the transports steamed at full speed into the anchorage off Guadalcanal because of the fear that other Jap ships, known to be in the area, might intercept and sink them while crammed with thousands of American troops. The *Washington* with the speedy little *Atlanta* and destroyers followed them in to cover possible surface attack. Although Jap ships did not appear, Jap planes did, and bombed the airfield and anchorage. The two transports were untouched: and once unloaded, they got under way and steamed south at high speed to clear the area. At air defense starting at dawn, when we met the returning transports leaving Guadalcanal, we followed them south for a short distance. Then word reached us that an air attack against the carrier *Hornet* was imminent.

We left the transports and at full speed dashed northward to lend fire-support to the threatened ship. Apparently the Jap carriers that were seeking the *Hornet* failed in their hunt, and unmolested the *Hornet* lived out another day before she was to meet her doom.

After being caught off balance, the Japanese high command had focused their attention on recovering Guadalcanal. To this critical area they had rushed most of their large navy. Our smaller forces were now forced to play a desperate game to prevent the attempt by the enemy to win back the Solomons. Our too-few ships were being rushed back and forth to plug up gaps in our defense as the superior Jap forces, broken up into tactical units, swept down and virtually sealed off the Solomons from our closest bases in the New Hebrides and New Caledonia. Before the onslaught our South Pacific force, which consisted of one battleship, the *Washington*, two carriers, the *Hornet* and damaged *Enterprise*, and a few remaining cruisers and destroyers, retired southward to the protection of our bases.

The *Washington* and her screen needed refueling as they headed south. Because of the presence of thick enemy submarine concentrations, this could not be done at sea, and it was decided to put in to Espiritu Santo at the northern tip of the New Hebrides Islands for oil.

As soon as we had entered the narrow and winding passage between the Islands leading into the harbor, the signal was given by the shore base for all ships to get under way and leave at once. Jap carriers were near, and an air attack was expected at any moment. Ships of all types necessary to support an invasion and service the fleet began to up-anchor and desert the crowded harbor. For hours the nondescript group of tankers, transports, cargo ships, landing-ships, tenders, destroyers, cruisers, baby carriers, filed solemnly past us on their way out as we lay at anchor in the harbor entrance. Even the battered *Boise* and *Salt Lake City*, who had buried their many dead ashore there, were given no respite. In the darkening afternoon they steamed slowly and proudly past, with the scars of battle plainly visible on their torn sides. As we stood about the decks watching the procession of ships creep by at funeral pace, the seriousness of the tactical situation struck us deeply.

The decks of the *Washington* were covered with hoses as we fueled our two destroyers and at the same time were fueled by a tanker. From the air strips surrounding the harbor the drone of engines indicated that many planes were taking off to meet the expected enemy. Navy twin-engined PBYS rose from the confined water and winged north and west to patrol. Quick work by our deck force and engineers enabled us to complete fueling in four hours; and at eight in the evening we also got under way to beat an ignominious retreat. The hazards of navigating the treacherous reef-filled passage from the harbor to the open sea were bad enough in daylight, when bearings and ranges from land points were available. But as we pulled out, it was pitch black, and the narrow beams of the searchlights provided a very inadequate amount of light. By guess, by God and by good seamanship we managed somehow to reach the sea without ripping out our bottom. Jap reconnaissance planes had flown over Espiritu Santo, but no attack in force arrived.

The next day, October 16th, we joined the cruisers *Chester*, *Helena* and *San Francisco*, with their destroyers, and as Task Force 67 we hovered near the lower edge of the Solomons. During this time the American newspapers were headlining the fact that the U. S. fleet was holding the Japs at bay away from the Solomons. From where we stood, it looked a bit different. North of us and separated by the island barrier, were operating four Jap battleships and two carriers, escorted by a large number of cruisers and destroyers. Nightly the enemy was sending in ships to bombard our small lease on Guadalcanal, smashing at our gun emplacements, and planes and installations on the airfield. We were powerless to prevent these blows, which were nearly crushing the Marines' defense under the heavy impact of tons of shells. Because of our inferiority in ships and airpower, we were not able to drive away the main Jap forces. Our only chance to hurt the enemy might have been in catching small parts of their large fleet.

However, Japanese snooper planes and the possibility of air attack kept us under constant observation and at a respectable distance, precluding any chance of our steaming into the Solomons at top speed and cutting up an isolated Jap force. The virtual blockade the Japs had thrown around the Solomons had put our forces there in desperate straits. Practically no gas was left for the planes based there, and food and ammunition were getting short. While we were able occasionally to slip in small reinforcements, the enemy was pouring in fresh troops almost daily to face our battle-worn soldiers and

Marines. As one Marine, many months later when the bloody campaign was over, said to us in describing the situation: "Brother, things was in a hell of a mess!"

On many occasions we made false starts and headed north at full speed to attack a group of bombarding Jap ships. But each time either we were hopelessly outnumbered, or the enemy ships had a chance to get away, and we returned to our former area to circle about waiting for another chance. We spent days steaming in giant circles, always staying within an area of about one hundred miles as we loitered just below the islands.

One evening we got word that our task force was going to split up later that night. The *Washington* was to separate from the cruisers and go its own way. After the usual exchange of instructions and good-byes over the short-wave radio, the *Washington* had changed course and headed out of the formation, when suddenly—

Whoosh! The sound of a terrific explosion filled the air as flames leaped up and out into the darkness at the spot where the formation of cruisers lay. The clanging of the general-alarm warning bell sent the *Washington's* crew running to battle-stations. Ammunition was brought up, and our big guns aimed at the spot where the sheet of flames had appeared and then suddenly gone out. The possibility that we had run into a Japanese surface force was uppermost in everyone's mind. The gun-crews were itching to open fire at the targets on the radar screen. These targets were our own cruisers, however, and no other groups of ships could be picked up. The voice of the officer of the deck on the cruiser *Chester* coming over the short-wave radio cleared up the situation.

"We have been torpedoed," it said, "and we are not able to move under our own power. We may be able to in a few hours."

A tug from Espiritu Santo was sent out immediately to tow back the *Chester*, which had a gaping hole in her side leading into the engine spaces. Before the tug arrived, the cruiser managed to get under way and make a speed of four knots, but a breakdown again made the ship helpless. After the tug had towed for a while, the *Chester* started off again and eventually made port under her own power. All the while the damaged ship worked its way to Espiritu, the *Washington* covered the withdrawal, protecting her against any attempt that might have been made by Japanese surface units to complete the job and sink her. The cruiser's slow speed made her an easy target for enemy subs, but watchful destroyers kept them away.

SHORTLY AFTER THE *Chester* entered the New Hebrides port, we followed her in, and once anchored, we were able to get the details of the torpedoing. Seven men had been killed or were missing, while scores had been injured. Some men sleeping out on deck had been blown over the side. One of the men who went over managed to react quickly enough to grab part of the propeller guard, a frame putting out from the side of the ship aft to keep obstacles and other ships away from the screws. After hanging for sometime, his shouts got the attention of people on deck, who hauled him up. Another man, not so fortunate, was sleeping in the hangar that carried the cruiser's scouting planes. The torpedo struck below the man, and the terrible force threw him into a stanchion so hard that his body was wrapped around it with his knees knocking his brains out.

The harbor was practically empty. The jungle that grew down to the water's edge was extremely wild. While we were only in the harbor for a day, the ship was crowded with visitors—mostly Marines of the raider battalions who had been flown out of the Solomons. They verified to us the toughness of the fighting on Guadalcanal. While we had been steaming off the southern fringe of the Solomons, we had sent destroyers, which

were able to sneak in undetected, to pick up Marine liaison parties. With the Marines acting as spotters, the destroyers had fired thousands of rounds into Jap positions, destroying their guns, ammunition dumps, or masses of infantry. When the Jap ships had come in to use the same technique against our troops, the Marines attested to the potency of the naval bombardments. Bombs from planes had not bothered the men nearly as much as had the pounding given them by five-inch or larger guns carried on Jap ships. When Jap battleships using fourteen-inch guns had worked over Henderson Field and Marine lines, the effect had been devastating both on material and personnel.

The Marines told us of an incident that took place at the temporary hospital in Espiritu where shell-shocked Marines flown out from Guadalcanal had been put for recuperation. A high wind that struck the island knocked a lot of coconuts off the trees, and with a terrific clattering they hit the tin roof of the ward where the shock patients were. Some of the patients climbed under their beds or lay flat on the floor; but most of them, thinking the Japs had struck, took to the jungle. Nearly three days were required before all of the patients were rounded up.

Late in the afternoon of the day we had arrived with the *Chester*, the *Washington* got under way and put out from Espiritu to take up our patrol and wait for the chance to strike at the Japs. We joined the force of cruisers, now minus the *Chester*, with which we had operated before, and again took station just below Guadalcanal.

On October 25th, three distinct Jap groups, each larger than any of our forces, surged down toward the Solomon and Santa Cruz islands. With them came transports and cargo ships to bolster their large forces on Guadalcanal. This was the first of three great efforts to break the back of U. S. naval power protecting our forces. Also, they were bringing in sufficient men and equipment to enable them to mount an offensive in which they hoped to make a start in seizing and holding the island for them forever. During the afternoon of that day we had been at battle stations because of the probability of an air attack. Toward evening our ill-assorted force, which consisted of the *Washington*, the heavy cruiser the *San Francisco*, the light cruiser *Helena*, and one very light cruiser the *Atlanta*, speeded up to twenty-four knots. We headed for Russell Island near the western tip of Guadalcanal. With our force, which had as many types of guns, with different effective ranges, firing speeds, and explosive effects, we were expected to meet two Jap battleships and four cruisers escorted by destroyers.

At Russell Island the *Washington* and two cruisers each catapulted one scout plane. The group of three planes joined up and flew off into the moonlit night toward the body of water between Guadalcanal and Florida Island. We kept in constant touch with them by radio. At any moment, as we rushed at twenty-seven knots around the western tip of Guadalcanal toward Savo Island, we expected to hear that they had sighted the Jap force we intended to bring to battle. The planes had fuel for only a few hours' flight, and we were not able to pick them up as we steamed in search of the enemy.

When they were catapulted, the pilots realized this, and also the fact that they would have to chance Jap night fighters, and our own anti-aircraft-fire before they could set down in Tulagi harbor. They had never seen the harbor before, and its contours were unfamiliar. Darkened ships and wreckage of ships crowded the anchorage into which the planes were going to land in the night. The pilots' chances of surviving the flight appeared to be about fifty-fifty; yet they never hesitated, and the three of them scoured the lower Solomons area thoroughly for us. Reports came in every few minutes as they quickly covered their assigned searching areas: "No enemy ships sighted yet."

The hours passed and with them the initial tenseness. It seemed obvious that Japs had left and we would not meet them that night. One by one the planes were told to give up the search and land at Tulagi. That the Japs had visited the waters through which we passed was proved by the shambles our aviators found at Tulagi after landing there safely. One hour and a half before we had arrived off Tulagi, some Jap warships had shelled the harbor heavily. While this was going on, the rest of the large Jap force was covering the landing of men and supplies off Guadalcanal. Then the whole force, rather than risk a heavy engagement at that time, retired without waiting to meet our ships, which they knew were coming. One purpose we had accomplished: no attempt was made to shell Guadalcanal, and by the short time the transports had been off the Jap held parts of that island, we knew that they could not have put much ashore.

At two o'clock in the morning the bloodless battle was officially declared over as we headed west between Savo and Guadalcanal islands, then south, east of Russell.

AS WE RETIRED GRADUALLY to keep clear of Jap planes, new rumors came to us of a battle that was raging in the East. The original strategy as planned by Admiral "Bull" Halsey had been for us to blunt or wipe out the largest of the three Japanese groups operating off the islands, while our carrier forces, backed up by heavier ships to the east, engaged the remaining Jap groups. The Jap force we were to engage had pulled out but the others had not; and a grim struggle between the opposing carrier task forces raged near the Santa Cruz Islands. Under the weight of the outnumbering Jap planes' attack which broke through the swirling dogfights, the U. S. carrier *Hornet* was sunk and the carrier *Enterprise* hit three times. Our carrier strength in the Pacific, with the exception of the small converted flat-tops, which had neither the speed nor enough planes to operate against the Japs, was now reduced to one badly damaged carrier. The battleship *South Dakota*, which had just returned from the Navy Yard, was hit with a five-hundred-pound bomb by a lone Jap plane which dived in a surprise attack. One of her turrets was put out of commission, and our battleship strength in the South Pacific was reduced to one and two-thirds ships.

Operating against our two carriers, one battleship, and four cruisers and screening destroyers, had been a Jap force composed of four carriers, two battleships, and six cruisers and numerous destroyers. Two enemy carriers and one battleship had been severely mauled, but as far as could be determined, none of the enemy's big units had been sunk. The biggest loss incurred by the Japs was the estimated destruction of over one hundred and thirty planes. The first round in the climactic naval struggle for control of the Solomons had ended in a draw.

At the dawn general quarters on the second day of our retirement from the Russell, Savo Island jaunt, all hands on board ship stood weakly at battle stations. For nearly three weeks we had been under way continuously, with the exception of several few hours' stops at Espiritu Santo. Heavy watches and days spent at general quarters had taken their toll and the men were plain worn out. As I glanced around at the sleepy men crowded in the small confines of the fire-control tower, I could see that it would take a considerable shock or jolt to arouse them.

The shock came sooner than expected.

"Torpedo! Torpedo!" came shouts from the men out on deck manning the machine-guns. The ship listed sharply, and vibration shook us as the *Washington* heeled over into a sharp turn. Two muffled explosions within seconds of one another jarred the ship. Over my ear-phones came the unexcited voice of Spot One—Lieutenant Commander Seeley, in the top of the foremost struc-

ture: "Two torpedoes just exploded in our wake, and two more are headed for the ship." Breathlessly I relayed that information to the gunnery officer.

"Take a brace or lie on the deck," he yelled to all. Expecting to be knocked flat at any moment by the violent force of a torpedo's explosion, we jumped to comply.

"Will the torpedoes hit us?" asked the gunnery officer of me, knowing I would get the answer from Spot One. To the question I relayed, Seeley hesitated a second and then answered with his usual unhurried flat-toned voice:

"Yes, I believe so."

"Think so," I told the gunnery officer. We all hung on to parts of machinery and fire-control equipment for dear life, while the list of the ship changed to an even keel, and then quickly reversed as the ship was slammed into another full-ruddered turn. For perhaps thirty seconds that seemed like thirty minutes we waited for the expected crashes.

"The torpedoes passed just ahead. They're going to go between us and the *Atlanta*," came the welcome news from Lieutenant Commander Seeley. We all heaved sighs of relief and relaxed.

"Close but no cigar," whistled a seaman next to me, wiping imaginary sweat from his brow. It had indeed been close. We had been bracketed by four torpedoes apparently fired from long range in the misty half light of dawn. Near the end of their run, the torpedoes were close to the surface and porpoising. When they hit our wake, the hardness of the swirling water was enough to detonate the war-heads. Fragments filled the air as the torpedoes exploded close aboard our stern, but no one on the fan-tail was hurt. The Japanese submarines, which had been used tactically with great daring and skill, had wrought havoc on our task forces, but the luck of the *Washington* was becoming apparent to all hands aboard. Two weeks later our luck off Savo Island approached the fantastic.

Our force hurriedly steamed from the spot of the attack, leaving behind one destroyer to flush and if possible sink the Jap submarine. As we left the destroyer on the horizon, we could see the giant mushrooms of water formed by explosions of depth charges rising and disintegrating as she worried the submarine like a terrier with a rat.

Over the radio came the orders to our retiring force for the trim cruiser *Atlanta* and two destroyers to be refueled at sea, detached, and headed back to the Solomons for an assignment of shore bombardment. When we had reached an area that was clear of submarines, Admiral Lee, in charge of the force and aboard the *Washington*, signaled the two destroyers designated to make the strike to come alongside to refuel. On port and starboard sides our seamen rushed with orderly confusion as they skillfully handled the mainline lines and fuel hoses leading to both destroyers at once. In a minimum of time the fuel-tanks of both ships were topped off while we steamed at ten knots. No sooner had the two destroyers shoved off from our side, than the cruiser *Atlanta* came up from astern, gaining slowly on us until they too were alongside and receiving fuel from us. The *Washington*, because of its immense capacity of oil, had conducted fueling operations at sea nearly every fourth day during the month and a half that we had been in the Pacific battle-zone. While we were experts, it had become irksome to us to have to fuel repeatedly ships which were going to leave us to make strikes against the enemy. Meanwhile we steamed around the outskirts of the fighting like a prima donna. For all our size and big guns we had amounted to nothing more than an armed tanker while we floated around fueling ships doing the fighting and not fighting ourselves.

Our view of the *Atlanta* steaming off heading north was the last we ever had of her. Two weeks later her

brilliant career came to an end under the pounding of Jap guns in a ferocious night battle. The rest of the force continued southward. After several more days we arrived off the harbor of Noumea at the bottom of the French Island of New Caledonia, which stretches along the upper eastern coast of Australia.

A short time after we had dropped the anchor in the outer edge of the harbor, our lookouts caught sight of the masts of the returning task forces. They had fought the Japs near the Santa Cruz Islands nearly a week before while we had steamed on a night venture through the Solomons. Soon they had entered the harbor and were passing close aboard on their way to the mines anchorage. To cheer the battered fleet as they passed us, the entire crew of the *Washington* was assembled on deck. Amid the hearty "Hip-hip-hurrah!" rendered by us in tribute to the splendid fight they had made, a large part of our South Pacific fleet steamed by. Smashed decks, wrecked gun-mounts, and torn bulkheads told the story of their grim struggle against overwhelming odds.

ON NOVEMBER 8TH, 1942, as we watched two loaded transports get under way for the Solomons, we knew we would have to follow soon to furnish them protection. At noon on November 11th, after we heard that the largest concentration of Jap warships and transports yet assembled in the South Pacific was coming down from Truk and Rabaul, we got under way. The *Washington*, the damaged *South Dakota* and *Enterprise*, the cruisers *San Diego* and *Northampton* with our force of destroyers, cleared the harbor and headed north at twenty-one knots. We had sailed to the scene of fighting before with the expectation of doing battle and had been disappointed. But this time we knew that we inevitably must be caught up in the vortex of the final battles for the control of Guadalcanal.

On our way north we held anti-aircraft burst-firing practices to tune up our gun crews. While firing our machine-guns, several stray shots hit a destroyer and wounded several seamen. One man standing on the fore-castle was hit by an explosive shell which pierced his chest and exploded on the bulkhead behind him. The other man was hit in the stomach by a shell which lodged in his pelvis—unexploded. An emergency call for a doctor was sent to the *Washington* by the destroyer, which carried none. Admiral Lee signaled the smaller vessel to come alongside. As the deck force rigged the boat-swain's chair needed for the transfer, Dr. Lindsay, a young dark-haired Lt. (j.g.) prepared his medical kit. Despite the roughening sea, the Doctor was put aboard the destroyer, and in a few minutes was tending the critically injured men. The seaman, with the explosive machine-gun shell lodged in his body that threatened to detonate at any moment, had been carried below on a stretcher. Despite his suffering he managed to smile and kid the men carrying him down, saying:

"You guys handle me gently now or I'll shake myself and blow hell out of all of you." Doctor Lindsay with the help of the bomb-disposal expert aboard the ship managed to extricate the projectile and heave it over the side. The seaman, who for a short while had been a living bomb and considered a menace, recovered completely, and was welcomed back into the company of his relieved friends.

Late on the night of November 12th and early morning of the 13th while we rushed northward, the second of the three crucial battles for Guadalcanal was blazing in a fiery mêlée off Savo Island. Admirals Callaghan and Scott, leading their force of two heavy cruisers, three light cruisers and eight destroyers, perished in the bloody battle which left only one destroyer out of our force of thirteen ships undamaged or sunk. The Japs had swept

down from the north in four columns, and after receiving a pummeling from our planes during the day, continued on despite damage.

That night our cruiser force formed into a single column and steamed slowly between the islands in search of the enemy. Shortly before midnight the Japs were picked up by our ships, and as the two forces steamed toward each other, the enemy had no inkling that out in the still black night loaded American guns were being trained on them. When the Japs and Americans on collision courses had closed to within several thousand yards of one another, the American guns opened at point-blank range, raking the Jap formations.

But the courses of the opposing sides soon brought the two forces together into a confused jumble where intermingled friend and foe dodged and twisted as they pounded each other. The tactics of the battle degenerated when each side lost cohesive control of their units, and in the tangled running fight each individual ship was for itself as they wheeled and turned in the crowded waters. The range between the ships was so short that the blast from the muzzles of the guns in some cases did more damage than the shells themselves.

Destroyers, with no room to maneuver, fired torpedoes at ships so close that the "tin fish" had no chance to become armed and merely bounced off the steel sides. Large ships were slashed unmercifully by smaller ships so close aboard that the heavy guns, which could not be depressed sufficiently to pour shells into the small ships' hulls, blew off their superstructures instead. In the island- and reef-bounded water, the ships churned and thrashed in the death struggle as they maneuvered at high speed. So closely packed had the water become that Jap and American warships attempted to ram one another as they crossed under the intermittent light of burning ships, blazing oil spread over the water, and the fitful flashes of big guns.

Gradually the firing died down and ceased as both sides retired to gather what was left of their smashed forces. But the light from burning ships and wreckage continued to flare up occasionally in the night, revealing the oily black surface dotted with human and material cargo spilled out of the sunken ships. From Jap- and American-held territory sped smallboats, appropriately called "meat wagons," to pick up survivors. Schools of sharks, attracted by the blood of wounded and dead sailors floating in the morass of oil and wreckage, knifed through the slimy mess to slash at the helpless men. Groups of Japs and American sailors continued to fight even after their ships had been lost. With knives and bare fists they struggled for the possession of life-rafts or any bit of wreckage that would float or keep them clear of sharks. In the dark one American sailor shared a life-jacket with a man he thought was a shipmate. The light of dawn revealed that his companion was a Jap, and a struggle for the life-jacket began. With a knife the Jap hacked at the American's arm that held the jacket and cut it off. But the American's other arm held the Jap's head under water until he drowned, leaving our sailor in possession of the prize.

One of the two Jap battleships that had been in the engagement against our cruisers and destroyers was so badly damaged that the speed of three or four knots she was capable of making would not enable her to clear the area and head for safety. The morning would bring our swarms of dive bombers and torpedo planes out to send her to the bottom. Realizing this, the Japs edged close to Guadalcanal and began to unload all her ammunition against Henderson Field. Back and forth for hours the steady barrage of hundreds of shells crept, covering nearly every yard of the field, blasting machine shops, plane revetments, hangars, gun-emplacements, and Marine-held trenches and foxholes. As the earth-shaking

salvos walked the length and breadth of the field, those not hit were dazed. The men could feel themselves going mad as the shattering explosions ripped and tore at them. The end of the world seemed near.

Dawn of a gray day revealed the carnage that had been wrought on land and on the sea. Off Savo Island the Japs had been stopped, but at a terrific price. Amid floating debris and the smell of gunpowder, oil and smoke, the *Atlanta* drifted, her topsides beaten to wreckage. Four of our destroyers, the *Cushing*, *Laffey*, *Barton* and *Monssen* had sunk during the night. The cruisers *San Francisco*, *Portland* and *Juneau* had been badly damaged, with high loss of life. The destroyers *Aaron Ward* and *Starrett* were barely afloat. The cruiser *Helena* and destroyer *O'Bannon*, both lightly damaged and the destroyer *Fletcher*, which was untouched, had fared better than the rest of our broken force.

One of our cruisers that had been unable to get steam up after receiving many hits during the night managed with the coming of dawn to get under way and sink a damaged Japanese cruiser that was dead in the water close by. Scores of our smallboats began to bring in hundreds of badly burned oil-covered American sailors who had been drifting in the water most of the night. In spite of their harrowing ordeal their spirit was still good, and when asked what had happened during the night, they laughed and replied:

"Damn it, you can't fight battleships with cruisers and destroyers!" And yet our force had done just that, and the enemy ships sunk and damaged gave proof that our ships had won a great victory. Two Japanese heavy cruisers, one light cruiser, and five destroyers had been sunk. Two light cruisers and three destroyers had been damaged. Both Jap battleships opposing our lighter forces had been badly battered, and one was attempting to steam away after bombarding Guadalcanal for hours.

LATER IN THE MORNING the *Atlanta* sank; the *Juneau* with her fore-castle awash, was hit with one or two torpedoes fired by a Jap submarine as she tried to retire. Flames and billowing clouds of black smoke swirled around the *Juneau*, and when this was blown away by the wind, nothing remained of the ship except a score of survivors bobbing in the water. The ship had simply disintegrated. Men on the surrounding ships that made up the remnants of our fleet broke into tears as they watched the gallant ship die. One sailor on the *San Francisco* dropped dead as he gazed in horror at the fate of the small cruiser.

On Henderson Field the dawn revealed a shambles. Scarcely anything serviceable remained after the devastating bombardment by the fourteen-inch guns of the mortally wounded enemy battleship. The Marines' lowest point in the entire bloody campaign had been reached. Everything they had fought and died for on the miserable island seemed smashed. The flame of their will to continue the fight sputtered and threatened to burn out. But somehow that small flame kept burning; and soon, fanned by the leaders who furnished the hard backbone of the corps, it grew and burned brighter than ever. All hands not in the fighting lines were pressed into service to get ready the wrecked airfield. Mechanics worked over the few untouched planes and salvaged what parts they could from the wrecked ones. Gangs of men swarmed over the runways to fill the great craters dug by the heavy Jap shells. News of the coming of the carrier *Enterprise's* planes whipped their efforts into a frenzy to have the field ready in time to receive them.

Steaming toward Guadalcanal from the south were the last ships the United States Navy could throw into the showdown battle for the island. There were no more reserves. Our final success or failure depended on this comparatively small force rushing at high speed to reach

Guadalcanal before the Japs in their third and last try could overwhelm our defenses. Even this force was reduced when the carrier *Enterprise*, our only remaining first-line carrier in the South Pacific, was ordered by Halsey to fly her planes into the airfield and retire to safety under the escort of two cruisers. The damaged *Enterprise* was not to be risked in the culminating battle that was to be fought on the surface, and her planes were flown to our unsinkable carrier—Guadalcanal.

When the welcome Navy planes dropped down on Henderson Field, little time was allowed them for rest. Not far off the damaged Jap battleship with two destroyers hovering near it was attempting to sneak away. Enemy bombers and fighters continued to hit Henderson Field in the attempt to render it impotent. The skies above vibrated to the drone of airplane engines, rattle of machine-gun fire, and the loud whine and scream of planes locked in battle.

Joining and reinforcing the planes left intact on the airfield, the *Enterprise* planes hastily refueled and bombed up. While some flew far out to sea to harass the retreating foe, the rest of the planes roared to attack the battleship attempting to escape. All day wave after wave of our planes plummeted out of the sky, or swept along close to the surface to dive-bomb or torpedo the slow-moving target. When our planes returned, they gassed, rearmed, and headed out to strike once more. As bombs crashed down again and again on the shattered ship, the superstructure and decks crumpled to a mass of twisted burning wreckage. Clouds of smoke erupted from the wrinkled sides, and decks turned cherry red from the heat of many fires. But by some miracle she remained afloat, and even managed to make a few knots as she forged ahead slowly under the crushing air attacks that continued throughout the day. Our airmen grew desperate as the afternoon wore on. In spite of the havoc wrought on the ship they had not been able to sink her.

The tenacious and fanatic Jap crew of the battered ship fought her with suicidal valor as she was ripped to pieces by eight torpedoes, sixteen one-thousand-pound bombs and countless five-hundred-pound hits. And at last the Jap battleship, with her ruptured decks awash, shook in her death throes, rolled over and sank.

While our airmen were accounting for the enemy ship, far-ranging patrol planes brought back reports of having seen the second of the two large fleets that had been assigned the job of taking Guadalcanal. The Japs' first fleet had fought to the death with our cruisers; and now, thinking that our Navy was broken and the way clear, a horde of Jap warships and transports were sweeping down to invade and reconquer Guadalcanal. As the radio messages poured in from the distant planes which had made contact with the Japs, the apparent size of their four groups of ships was stunning. The first group of Jap, comprised twenty-four transports with escorts. Close by the second and third groups were made up of two battleships, one light cruiser, eleven destroyers, and twelve transports with destroyers. The fourth group included three light cruisers and twelve destroyers. From the estimated course of speed of the Jap forces, it was obvious that they would arrive within range of our planes on the field during the forenoon of the next day. Navy Catalinas, twin engine seaplanes, prepared to take off with torpedoes to harry the enemy ships.

"Black Cats with fish heads up the slot," came the dispatches over the radio when the Catalinas, painted black for night-flying, took off with torpedoes, and winged between the Northern Solomon Islands to meet the Japs. Several hits against the enemy were scored, but in the darkness the results could not be ascertained.

In the same black night the steady hum and vibration of the *Washington's* massive engines picked up a new note as we increased speed. In the wardroom groups of

officers gathered to talk quietly or listen to classical music played on records by the victrola. A solemnity induced by thoughts of the impending battle pervaded the atmosphere. In the darkened passageways and compartments around the ship small gatherings of the sailors discussed excitedly the battles off Guadalcanal during the preceding night and day. Not all had heard yet of the new concentration of Jap ships coming down, but they could tell by the ship's speed that they were on their way to meet something.

When the dawn broke, it revealed a hazy day to both officers and crew as they stood at battle stations searching the sky for the sight of Japanese planes. We were just off the northwestern tip of Guadalcanal. On our radars we could pick up the flights of both our own and enemy planes as they swarmed over the islands in combat. The group of Japanese transports, after having been hit by Black Cats during the night, had been unchecked, and they now had steamed to within range of our dive and torpedo bombers based on Henderson Field. While our planes flew out to meet the onrushing Jap ships, enemy planes flying from strips farther north in the Solomons were trying desperately to prevent our merciless air attacks on their troop transports. But the Japs, who by all rights should have been able to sweep the skies clear of our planes because of numerical superiority, could not stop our determined attacks that went on through the day. The transports, filled with the Emperor's soldiers who were coming to annihilate our troops once they landed at Guadalcanal, took a terrible pounding.

During the afternoon the *Washington* task force with Admiral Lee in command loitered at the western tip of the island. Jap planes, which were preoccupied with the air fighting over Guadalcanal, ignored us. Only ninety miles away lay a Jap carrier, but it too was involved in the plane battles and left us alone. Had the Japs hit us with planes and crippled our force, the whole course of the war in the Pacific might have been changed. Although Jap snooper planes and formations saw us, they reported to their warships, and we were identified as one battleship, one heavy cruiser, and four destroyers. The small tidy superstructure and the smooth lines of the *Washington* had made them believe us to be the cruiser.

EVENING SLOWLY DARKENED the sky and when night closed in about us everyone heaved a sigh of relief. The luck of the *Washington* had held up, and although we were plainly exposed, the Japs had missed their chance to damage or sink us. Our force with the exception of the *South Dakota*, which had one turret out of commission, was intact and ready to start on its night venture. At twenty-seven knots the force headed for the passage between Russell Island and the western tip of Guadalcanal.

Although our airmen had dealt a heavy body blow to the Japs, they had not stopped the enemy. Under the cover of night, the invasion fleet with a protecting flotilla of warships headed in toward Savo Island. This was to be no mere battle between task forces. This was to be the final climactic battle in which the Japs planned to wipe out our fleet and throw their troops ashore. It is rightly named the "Battle for Guadalcanal."

The Jap force contained in all one, probably, two battleships, three heavy cruisers, three light cruisers, over eight destroyers and an undetermined number of transports that were believed to be carrying twenty thousand Jap troops with equipment. As far as the Japs knew, the only American force to oppose them was ours—whose strength they had underestimated.

On Guadalcanal our troops were not aware that any task force was on the way to break up the final Jap naval assault. To the grim-faced soldiers and Marines the situation seemed desperate as the troops were realigned to

meet the expected Jap mass landings that would roll in from the sea. Machine-gun positions were set up on the beaches. Cooks, truck-drivers, MP's, all took their places along the hastily constructed shore defenses; their orders were to "hold at all cost."

At the port director's office on the island the skippers of the P.T. boats based there were told of the situation.

"We may have a battleship task force, Admiral Lee's outfit, coming up here to meet the Japs, but we're not sure. Even if they do come, they probably won't get here in time. You fellows are the only Navy we have here now. We want you to sift through the destroyers and cruisers and get the transports." Despite what seemed like a suicidal mission, the three available P.T. boats got under way and prepared to stop what they could of the Jap invasion fleet.

In the *Washington's* communication-room the radio receivers clicked. It was a message from Halsey and contained only three blunt words—all that was needed: "Strike! Strike! Strike!"

Scattered about the ship's topsides, our radar operators and lookouts were on the alert straining to pick up the first contact with the enemy as we neared Russell Island. In the fire-control tower we sat in complete darkness save for the eerie light of the luminous dials on the instruments. The day had been hot; the warmth in the steel bulkheads made us sweat; and the air grew foul with the smell of bodies, for little fresh air drifted in from the small ports. The men crowded into the small space sat around silently and nervously at first after they had gone to general quarters. But as the ship plowed on, the men began to relax and to talk and joke. There began to be more than the usual kidding, and the laughter came easier—due probably to the terrific excitement each man felt but did not want to show.

"We are now passing just east of Russell Island!" came the report over the phones. The men in the fire-control tower jumped up and stared through the ports at the island, which appeared no more interesting than a heavy dark line against the lighter horizon.

"Betha we don't see any Japs till after midnight," said one of the seamen, breaking the silence.

"I'll take that," was the quick reply in the dark. Heated arguments over the time of our expected clash with the Japs broke out, and bets were made. But when that subject was exhausted, the men quieted down and went back to sitting—and thinking.

"Fires on the horizon bearing 340°," came over the phones. All hands rose quickly and took stations although no command had been given. The director in the fire-control tower was trained quickly to the bearing, and we searched the area. Nothing appeared on the thin line itself that separated the almost black water from dark gray sky. But miles beyond that, a flickering light tinged the dark gray of the sky with red.

"Probably a Jap transport burning out there," explained the Gunnery Officer, looking through his binoculars out the port. The men looked at one another. "Our planes hit quite a few of them this afternoon," the gun boss went on. Eagerly the men turned to question Commander Walsh about the day's air attack on the Japs. They had heard the news but not the details. While the Commander talked, the men forgot about the fires and settled back into their former positions.

More fires were reported, and the men got up to look through the optics or the portholes. Soon the whole horizon appeared to be flickering. We seemed to be leaving our world and entering one strange to all of us, as the weird lights danced and quivered fantastically around the ship. It was the right setting for the hell that was to come.

"The formation is being changed. We're forming up into a column," came Lieutenant Seeley's voice over my

phones. "I acknowledged and reported to the Commander. We watched the four destroyers which had been in a diamond-shape disposition around the *Washington* and *South Dakota* break up, and with extra speed forge ahead slowly to form a column ahead. The whole formation now was in one long line. The destroyers *Walke*, *Benham*, *Preston* and *Gwin* were leading, followed by the flagship *Washington*, with the *South Dakota* bringing up the rear. I glanced at my watch—nine thirty-five. The ship throbbed and thrummed as we sped on through the weirdly colored night.

"Stations!" THIS WORD OVER the phones sent everybody scrambling in a mad rush to get to their battle stations. Maybe we had come upon the Japs.

"Contact bearing 035°, range twenty-five thousand yards," was further information supplied over the phones. We searched on the bearing optically but could see nothing. Although there was no physical effort involved in our jobs, everyone was short of wind and breathing heavily. A glance around the small space revealed worried anxious faces half lighted by the greenish luminous light of the instrument dials.

"The contact is land," came over the phones. Everyone looked at one another and then, when the word "At ease," was given, they left their stations and collapsed in the places they had occupied before being aroused. The ship changed course to 090° and headed east and to the left of Savo Island, a small circular-shaped bit of land in the middle of the narrow body of water that divided Guadalcanal and Florida Island to the north. The time was a little after ten o'clock.

A half-hour passed, and aside from a few false contacts that brought us to stations, the time was spent in idle talk, with a few facetious remarks by the men sparking the otherwise drab conversation. When the vibration of the ship suddenly began to slack off, it brought startled looks. We had reduced speed to twenty-four knots. Savo Island was on our starboard beam and eleven miles away. The fires over the horizon were now so far astern that their shaking light no longer appeared in the heavens. The night was a little brighter as the layer of cumulus clouds had become thinner, allowing the partial moon to diffuse light through the gauzy blanket. Suddenly from Savo, that steep-sided, round-topped island, was wafted the sweet smell of honeysuckle. All of us crowded about the ports and inhaled the perfume deeply, wondering what tropical plant could have produced such a heavenly odor—an odor we welcomed gratefully after being nearly stifled by the former smells in our battle station.

A plane appeared out of the night and flew low over the formation, the flames from her exhaust making a flickering bluish-white pattern. Every antiaircraft gun in the ship tracked her quietly and could have shredded her if given the signal to fire. A light flashed from the plane signaling the Morse code number nine, which meant nothing in our recognition set-up for the night. After looking us over well, the plane vanished, still unidentified. A slight list to port indicated we were swinging right to head south toward Guadalcanal. Savo now lay on our starboard quarter. The sound of our wash lessened as speed was reduced to seventeen knots. Over all phones was passed the warning:

"The latest reports we have indicate a cruiser and several destroyers close by. All hands remain alert." Our skins felt damp and it was not all caused by the heat within the fire-control tower. . . .

On top of Tulagi on the high cliff a Marine corps correspondent and a Navy signalman had been waiting patiently for nearly three hours. Through binoculars they had looked regularly toward Savo Island and the channels on either side. Nothing but an occasional flare-up of something burning near Guadalcanal had re-

warded their vigilance. Then suddenly one—two—three—four destroyers passed around the north end of Savo Island. Breathlessly they looked through their binoculars. Two battleships appeared following in the wake of the destroyers.

"Whose are they?" the correspondent asked of the Navy signalman, his voice hoarse with excitement. The signalman gazed a while with his lips compressed, then without turning his head, answered jubilantly:

"They're ours! There they go now," he added "and here come a couple of battlewagons. It looks like they're all heading for Guadalcanal."

"What are those dark spots moving close to them?" asked the correspondent anxiously.

"Must be P.T. boats—" The signalman hesitated: "Yep, by God, they are P.T. boats!"

Aboard the three torpedo boats that had been patrolling the waters around Savo Island waiting for the Japs, the crews were sweating heavily. They had never been so scared before and never expected to come through alive. Tonight, when they made their runs through the Jap destroyers and cruisers to launch their fish at the transports, they were going to be blasted—blown to smithereens. Fear clutched at their hearts as they kept a sharp lookout for the invasion fleet.

"Here they are," said the radio man in the lead boat, his voice shaky.

"Well, we'll do the best we can," answered the skipper resignedly. The crews of the P.T.'s braced themselves for what was to be their last fight as the boats swung toward Savo Island and deployed for their runs.

And then suddenly they caught sight of the ships looming up before them.

On the bridge of the *Washington*, Admiral Lee paced up and down. Occasionally he stopped to bring the binoculars hanging around his neck up to his bespectacled eyes and sweep the horizon for signs of the enemy. In the pilothouse close by, Captain Davis was talking quietly to the navigator, checking on positions and courses through the reef-filled waters. All three of the high ranking officers could have been below at their proper battle stations behind the thick armor plate that would shield them; but instead they preferred standing on the exposed bridge where they could see the action clearly and fight the ship more efficiently. The four destroyers ahead in the dark were just barely visible from the bridge, and astern the *South Dakota* pitched ponderously in the slight groundswell as they followed in the *Washington's* path. A hushed silence made the quiet orders given to the steerswain in the pilothouse by the navigator seem like shouts.

"The gunnery officer reports that our directors have picked up and are tracking P.T. boats dead ahead. They seem to be coming in as if they're going to launch torpedoes at us!" The clear voice of the talk broke the silence. All eyes focused on the Admiral, waiting for his reaction to the report. Without hesitating, the Admiral left the wing of the bridge and went into the pilothouse. He picked up the microphone of our short wave radio, which acted as a walkie-talkie. Our set was tuned to the same frequency as that of Guadalcanal control center, and also the sets on the bridges of all our ships, including the tiny P.T. boats.

"Cactus," the Admiral began, talking into the mike and calling by the code name Guadalcanal control center.

"Cactus, this is Alfred" (our code name) "call off your boys. We are friendly. We are friendly." The Admiral waited, as did everyone on the bridge, for the reply. It must come soon or we would tangle with our own P.T. boats.

"Alfred, this is Cactus. We have no word as to your identity," the disheartening answer came back. At any moment the P.T.'s might start their runs.

"Get the big boy—get the big boy," said the Admiral. "Tell him this is Ching Chong China Lee. Get it! Ching Chong China Lee." The "big boy" was General Vandergrift, Commanding Officer of all our ground forces in the Solomons. He had been a classmate of Lee's at Annapolis. Because of years spent in the Navy on the China Station, the Admiral was known throughout the fleet by the nickname "Ching Chong China" Lee.

The minutes passed while the Admiral and Captain both worried whether they could identify our force before we would have to repel our own P.T. boats. At last:

"Alfred, this is Cactus. Your identity is established. We are calling off the boys." And the voice from the control center at Guadalcanal went on:

"Cookie," it said, addressing the P.T. boats. "Cookie, this is Cactus. The units you are near are friendly. They are friendly." Before "Cookie," as the torpedo boats were called in code, could answer, Admiral Lee had picked up the microphone again and blurted:

"Cookie—get the hell out of the way. We're coming through!"

"Yes sir, we sure will!" came back the voice of "Cookie" happily.

With the timely arrival of our force, the P.T.'s were relieved of the suicidal job of trying to stop single-handedly the entire Jap invasion fleet. They withdrew to the north and stopped their engines. Sandwiches and coffee were made, and from the foredecks of the tiny boats the men prepared to watch the coming battle.

In the fire-control tower of the *Washington*, all hands were on their feet now, ready for the moment when the first contact with the Japs was made. The ship listed to port slowly. We were coming right again, and our course was 270°. The time was nearly midnight and we were heading due west. In a few moments we would pass between Savo Island and Guadalcanal. Aloft the lookouts still stared into the darkness, and their eyeballs ached as they strained to catch sight of the enemy. The smell of honeysuckle, which had stayed with us as we rounded Savo, suddenly changed to the heavy smell of fuel oil.

"Objects in the water dead ahead," came over the phones. We investigated and discovered it was wreckage. Many ships had been sunk in these waters. We would be outnumbered, we knew.

ON THE BEACH NEXT to Henderson Field the Marines fidgeted and squirmed in anxiety. When were the Japs going to arrive? It was twelve o'clock now, and still no sign.

"There they are!" one of the lookouts croaked, pointing out across the water. Sure enough, as the ships began to file by slowly, it looked as if the Japs were getting ready to open up with a bombardment that would obliterate their shallow defenses.

"Hey, those are our ships!" exclaimed a sergeant. "Look! See, four of our tin cans and two battlewagons. Look, the Navy's out there!" The word ran quickly up and down the Marine-held position, and soon was substantiated by the official word from the control center that our task force had arrived and even now was gliding quietly by close to the beach.

The Marine correspondent and Navy signalmen on Tulagi had lost sight of our force as it neared Guadalcanal and blended in the gloom of the shoreline. But they kept sweeping the water with their binoculars, wondering where the Japs were. Suddenly two more ships appeared rounding Savo, following in the same course our ships had taken. Then a third larger ship appeared.

"Are those ours?" asked the correspondent quickly.

"No! Those are Japs—look at their superstructure!" the signalman yelled. The ships were passing through a moonlit spot in the water.

"Yes, they're definitely Japs. Things ought to start at any minute now!"

In the fire-control tower the men who had bet that we would not meet the Japs before twelve o'clock had just finished chiding the losers when—

"Stations!" The men were already at their posts.

"Targets bearing 70°." As we swung our director out to starboard, we heard a slight rumble. The turrets were swinging out to aim at the targets in the water through which we had just passed.

"What's the range?" asked the gunnery officer.

"Range is 18,500 yards. Radar reports three targets. Our bearings put us on the largest target," I answered. The gunnery officer nodded that he understood as he said very deliberately—enunciating clearly:

"All turrets load! All turrets load!" The hissing of the gas-ejection air system in the turrets as the breeches of the six-inch guns were opened seemed to scream.

"The Japs will hear us!" one of the talkers exclaimed. Like the rest of us, excitement had exaggerated the noise to him. The ship trembled slightly as twelve tons of sixteen-inch projectiles were rammed home in our nine big guns. The ship began to vibrate and surge ahead as we went up to full speed. Our wake swelled to an angry torrent. The ship heeled over to port. We were coming right a bit.

"Solution," reported the plotting-room below.

"On largest target—battleship or cruiser—18,000 yards. Plot reports solution—request permission to open fire," Commander Walsh's staccato voice asked of the Captain.

The rest of us in the tower had buck fever. For a year and a half we had been drilling and firing practices. Now here was the battle we had prepared for. Out there were Jap ships, with men manning real guns—guns that would be shooting back in a few seconds to try and blast us off the face of the water. Somehow it all seemed unreal.

On the bridge the Admiral sat down on his chair, which was secured to the bulkhead. Coolly he was looking through his binoculars. As yet he could not see the Japs.

"Request permission to open fire!" the Captain said as he stood beside him, his eyes following the line of our guns aimed at the Japs in the darkness.

"Have the other ships been given the word of our targets and permission to commence firing when ready?"

"Yes sir!"

"Then fire when ready!" Although the talker was only a few feet away, the Captain bellowed it.

"Commence firing!" A shattering roar split the night as our nine guns belched flame and destruction. For a second the ship was outlined by the searing flames that spewed from the great guns. Hot gases and smoke swept the ship as she bucked and jumped from the concussion. The ton-and-a-half projectiles looked like nine flaming balls as they arched up and up—seemed to hang in space—and fall rapidly nine miles away. The flaming balls disappeared. As the guns were reloaded, the hissing sound screamed again.

Another crash of our big guns rocked the ship. The nine flaming balls were on their way. Suddenly, the sharp yammering of our five-inch guns began; and a stream of sparks flowed out of the guns at an incredibly fast rate toward what appeared to be Jap destroyers at seven miles. Still no return fire from the enemy. A dull boom and a mushroom of flames from astern was followed by a talker yelling:

"The *South Dakota* has opened up!" Still no fire from the Japs. The overwhelming din, fingers of flame reaching through the ports, concussion hitting us like a slap in the face, swirling hot gases and acrid smoke numbed us in the fire-control tower. But we kept glued to our optics, watching for the effect of our shells and expecting

to see the flashes of Jap guns. None came. The big guns, punctuating the steady banging of the secondary battery, ripped out several more salvos. The fire-red balls were on their way again. They dropped down—and a billowing swirl of flames stained the skies and clouds. It was the Jap cruiser or battleship. Smothered by the weight of the devastating projectiles that ripped her apart, she erupted in a fiery explosion. Off to the left smaller fires burst out in the night—smashed Jap destroyers. The enemy, caught by surprise, had not yet fired a shot.

"Cease firing! Cease firing!" The gunnery officer yelled over and over again through the deafening uproar of guns. As startling as our first shattering salvo that opened the battle, the silence came—silence that was as overwhelming as the noise had been before. The first phase of the battle was over. The *Washington* had sunk a battleship or heavy cruiser with eight heavy-gun salvos, and a destroyer with the five-inch guns. The *South Dakota* had broken a light cruiser in half and damaged another. Somewhere ahead of us the *Kirishima* was approaching.

Through the ports in the fire-control tower, we could see the rapid stabs of light outlining our destroyers ahead, and hear the sharp barking explosions. A steady line of red dots arched toward a column of Jap destroyers closing on an opposite course.

THE HORIZON AHEAD of us suddenly twinkled from a myriad bursts of orange light. The clouds above turned a dull orange blue. Through the racket of our destroyers' five-inch guns ahead came a thunderous crackling sound. The Japs had finally opened up. We gritted our teeth. In a second a hail of shells would lash us. Involuntarily our heads ducked as we waited for the blinding flashes that would signal the hits.

Close to Savo Island the shoreline suddenly burst into flames. More Jap ships! Guns were now blazing everywhere. We were rushing into a hell of destruction. In one of the aloft directors, a seaman looking through his range-finder at the awesome sight screamed:

"Oh, my God, they're shooting back!" About the decks the exposed men crouched and hunched. The world stopped as they waited for the devastation that would sweep them to eternity. Like a stream of water from a hose, tracers from the Jap ships lying close to Savo poured over the tops beyond our destroyers. The streams of tracers lowered and funneled into the sea, spouting geysers short of the ships ahead. Then the stream lifted slightly, and explosive death crashed down on their decks and sides. Débris-filled bursts of flame covered the small ships. Racing Jap destroyers, screening larger ships coming around Savo, swooped in and let go torpedo spreads. The water was whipped to a froth as the speeding fish laced through, and suddenly the night ahead was blotted out by the blinding explosion and licking flames that engulfed one of our destroyers. The torpedoes had arrived. Inside the fire-control tower the bulkheads glowed. The light of the flames revealed the strained white faces and popping eyes of the men at stations. Thinking a Jap had been hit, the men cheered. But the gun boss growled:

"Shut up! That's one of ours!"

The *Washington's* five-inch guns blurted out again. Their line of tracers poured toward the Japs lying close to Savo, who were sending the murderous fire into our destroyers. Starting at the left of the line of the stabbing orange flares, the sparks from our guns flowed back and forth, gradually working to the right. The flashes of the enemy guns were being stopped, to be replaced by dancing red fires as one by one the ships were smashed.

Another explosion ahead of us heightened the glow in the fire-control tower. Another of our destroyers was

concealed by the glare of fires. Relentlessly the incessant stream of tracers poured into our helpless ships. Another puff of flame and black oily smoke rose from yet another destroyer. The little ships had absorbed the torpedoes aimed at us by the Jap destroyers. But the big ships kept firing, and under the steady pounding of their guns, the last of the Jap firing near Savo sputtered and died out. Silence hit us as all firing ceased. Except for fires burning ahead, astern, and along the shore, the night was dark. The second phase of the battle was over, and the *Washington* five-inch guns had damaged and silenced five to nine transports and small ships. But our brave little destroyer force had nearly been annihilated. In a few moments the *Kirishima* and *Washington* would meet.

The *Washington's* decks listed at a sharp angle as we swung to avoid what was left of one of our destroyers. All that could be seen was four or five feet of the bow protruding from wreckage and oil. A low-hanging black cloud of smoke served as a marker for the spot where the *Preston* had fallen apart under shells and torpedoes. We swept past and underwater explosions jolted the ship—depth charges! Ahead of us loomed the gigantic mountain of flames from the second stricken destroyer. About the *Washington's* decks the shouts of the repair parties and machine-gunners were heard as they cut loose and threw overboard liferafts. The flickering glow of crackling flames and searing heat struck us when we came up to the burning *Walke*. Her bow from the bridge forward was gone. Shouts and cries of men came to us as they waved and jumped into the water.

"Save us! Come back! Help!" The men were leaping into the morass of thick oil and debris, to join the scores of blackened men already wriggling in the gummy mess. Some men were darting into the flames engulfing the afterpart of the bridge, and were swallowed up, only to reappear dragging smoking bodies. We swept by the scene of horror like an express. The third destroyer, the *Benham*, was dead in the water, nearly cut in half from a torpedo hit. The fourth destroyer, the *Gwinn*, hit by shells, fell off to our port side.

WHILE PASSING THE REMNANTS of our destroyer force, we drew closer to the massed columns of Jap ships behind Savo.

"Column of Jap ships bearing 030°." Our big guns swung to meet the new threat. The hiss of air under high pressure being blown through the barrels, and the rumble of projectiles being rammed, broke the silence as we closed on the main body of Jap warships. Two columns of enemy vessels became visible as we rounded Savo. We were on the largest of a column of four ships. A battleship: The *Kirishima*, thirty-two thousand tons, twelve fourteen-inch guns, armor nearly as thick as our own. The two giants had come to grips. The struggle of the Titans was about to start.

"Solution," reported plot. The range between the two ships was closing. Now it was five miles. Astern the *South Dakota* had passed to starboard of the burning *Walke*. She was silhouetted to the Japs, whose guns got on her immediately. Lethal tongues of flame shot out from the Jap ships. The guns of the *South Dakota* roared back, but she was being hit repeatedly.

A terrific blast shook the *Washington*. The nine red balls had started on their way to the *Kirishima*, now four miles away and clearly visible. The clamoring racket of the five-inch guns broke out. Starshells looped out from the *Washington* and hung over the Jap battleship. In our dimly-lighted five-inch mounts the sweaty crew serviced the guns. Load, ram, fire! Load, ram, fire! The mounts shook and rattled. Smoke filled the air. A two-gun salvo every two seconds from each mount. The pace was terrific. Suddenly a young-faced seaman stiffened and began to scream. An older man, a petty officer, slid

through the crew bent to their work and slapped the screaming seaman twice across the face. The younger man shook his head and went back to his job.

In the turrets a gun-crew hopped clear as the tray leading to one of the breeches of the big guns flopped down. A huge billet six feet long, sixteen inches in diameter, weighing a ton and a half, lay in the tray. With a grating noise the slug was thrown into the breach by the hydraulic rammer. The doors to the powder-car snapped open. Three large powder-bags rolled down into the tray. The men strained as they got them clear of the next three bags of powder that came tumbling down. A grating noise again as the powder was rammed. While the great breach to the gun was open and down, a sailor standing in the pit below inserted a primer. Now the breach was swung up and closed. The gun-captain leaped to the side and snapped on his ready switch. The turret jarred, and the great breach bounced back as the gun fired. The range was point-blank now. So close, no time was wasted in depressing the big guns to loading position. They were nearly horizontal as they were fired every twelve seconds. Load, ram, fire! Load, ram, fire!

On top of the foremast structure was an observer for the engineering gang tending the racing engines in the bowels of the ship. Over his phone's headset he was trying to tell men below who could not watch the battle what was happening. Hot gases and choking smoke enveloped him. The foremast shook like a sapling, and he was nearly thrown off his feet. The billowing flames from our guns and the incessant blasting of the smaller guns were blinding him, and the uproar made it impossible to speak. But he caught sight of the red balls smacking into the *Kirishima*. Fires were breaking out on the Jap battleship. For the benefit of the men below, he cheered into the phones.

On the bridge the Captain and Admiral were hanging on to the bulwarks and shields. The concussion and blast of the guns was almost beating them to the deck. But they stuck it out to watch our shells plunge into the *Kirishima*. The best defense is a good offense, and the *Washington* was ablaze with the flash of guns. Geysers of water mounted on either side of the ship. Tracers whipped between the stacks. The jar of underwater explosions rocked the ship. The chaplain, on the signal bridge, was on hand to tend to the wounded and dying—but there was none. Not a single Jap shell had struck us yet. The ship's photographer was also on the signal bridge. He raised his camera to take a picture of the burning *Kirishima*. But the blast of the main-battery guns dashed his camera to the deck.

Down below in the plotting-rooms were the machines that were calculating the course, speed and range of the *Kirishima*. Nearly as cool and calculating as the machines themselves were the men who were running them. Far out of reach of the blast and concussion and noise of the battle raging above, they sat quietly, watching their dials and making adjustments to the computers with simple knobs. Although their jobs were passive as they kept their attention glued to the instruments, every turn of a crank or knob in the machines solving the problem was just as deadly to the *Kirishima* as the loading or firing of our flaming guns.

Over my phones as I looked through my spotting glass I could hear Lieutenant Seeley's calm voice repeating: "No change, no change!" Our shells were knifing through the outer skin of the Jap battleship and erupting within, blowing her insides out. From somewhere behind the *Kirishima* the brilliant beam of a searchlight suddenly swept past us and focused on the *South Dakota*. The *South Dakota*, now badly damaged, was engaging several Jap cruisers. Her guns turned on the ship whose light was exposing her and the light went out. But another ship illuminated our hard-hit battleship.

In one of the *Washington's* secondary battery directors, a Marine trainer yelled through the noise to the Marine officer in charge:

"I'll get that bastard!" And he swung the director and following guns onto the Jap cruiser, in whose light the *South Dakota* appeared a ghastly white. Under a welter of shells from both the *Washington* and *South Dakota*, the Jap cruiser, overwhelmed, rolled over, and sank. Still another Jap searchlight swept the area, but was quickly smashed under our five-inch guns.

Our after five-inch mount pumped starshells continuously over the Jap battlegroup. The area around her was bright as daylight. But when some of the starshells fell short, their dangling flares blinded and obscured our target temporarily.

"Ask the Captain if he wants to continue firing starshells," yelled Commander Walsh to Pascucci, the yeoman. The noisy racket of guns smothered Pascucci's attempt to get through at first. The commander watched the effect of our shells on the *Kirishima*. Presently Pascucci grabbed the Commander's arm, and pressing his mouth close to his ear, shouted above the firing.

"Sir, the Captain says: 'Goddammit, shoot anything!'" The starshells were fired, but no longer above and behind the battleship, silhouetting her. They were fired straight into the ship itself, and the flares added to the fires that were already speckling the ship. The *Kirishima* now lay a battered, twisted hulk, racked with fire.

"Cease firing! Cease firing! Shift targets," the Commander yelled. Our guns swung to pick up a cruiser. But the *Kirishima* was not finished yet. Two turrets opened up again, and huge mountainous splashes rose alongside the *Washington*. Our guns swung back and began the final hammering of the sinking Jap battleship.

Astern of the *Washington* the battleship *South Dakota*, severely damaged from more than a score of hits, fired her only remaining turret at a Jap cruiser. Sheets of flame from her big guns stretched across the water. In her fire-control tower an enlisted talker stared through the port at the *Washington* ahead, still locked in combat with the Jap battleship. In the water surrounding the *Washington* rose tremendous plumes of water, kicked up by plummeting shells smacking the surface. It seemed as though some monstrous giant had dropped a handful of boulders down upon the *Washington*, so numerous were the splashes that almost obscured her from view.

"The *Washington's* been hit! The *Washington's* been hit!" the talker kept shouting.

But the *Washington* was not hit. By some miracle and good shooting that had overwhelmed the opposing ships, the *Washington* was still untouched. The *Kirishima* turned away to flee, but it was too late. Another salvo of ours walked across her. Her midships section was blasted open. Either a magazine or the machinery spaces had been hit. A spout of flame, clotted with chunks and bits of metal, rose hundreds of feet in the air, and the ship heeled over quickly. We could see clearly the tops of her turrets. The battle was over. The *Kirishima* was through, and was going down as she circled out of control. We ceased firing. The *Washington* had fired the first and last shots of the battle. Ringing Savo were burning hulks and broken ships. What was left of the Jap fleet was fleeing wildly toward the northwest. The third and last phase of the battle was over. The third and greatest attempt by the Japs to win back Guadalcanal had ended in disaster. . . .

The correspondent and the signalman standing on Tulagi watched the explosion spewing out of the *Kirishima's* belly. From the light created by it, they could see the Jap battleship sinking. To the men on the cliff it seemed as though the giant blast had been a signal for the battle's end. The flickering of gunfire gradually got farther away as the battle drifted northwestward. Soon

the flashes died down completely, and the only light in the blackness was that of the flare-up of burning wrecks.

"Somebody just took a hell of a beating," said the signalman, "and it wasn't us."

On the bridge, the Admiral and the Captain gazed into the darkness. They could see nothing. But the reports of more contacts flowed in. Four small targets heading northwest at twenty-nine knots were being tracked by the main battery. The *Washington* was making twenty-seven knots following them. A few transports under a heavy smoke-screen were sneaking away around Savo. No reports, however, of the whereabouts of the *South Dakota*. The communication officer could not get her on any of the radios, nor could our radar pick her up. She had vanished.

Suddenly a huge explosion came from our starboard quarter. The emperor's battleship *Kirishima* slid under the seething water to add its hulk to the wrecked ships that gave Iron Bottom bay its name. Out of the charthouse came the navigator, and informed the Admiral and Captain of our position—north of Russell Island. The Jap invasion fleet had been shattered. What was left of the Japs were in full flight. There would be no bombardment of Henderson Field that night; nor would the Japs ever land the full division of troops with equipment that had come with the warships to wipe out our nearly spent Marines and soldiers. The Japs had lost Guadalcanal, with all their troops and equipment. Our first offensive in the Pacific had stuck.

The time was nearly three in the morning. At the Admiral's command, the ship headed south and slowed to twenty-one knots. The crew, exhausted by nearly twenty-four hours of general quarters, and the strain of grueling battle, dropped where they were and slept.

A FEW HOURS AFTERWARD, the *South Dakota*, which had all her radios shot away, repaired a transmitter and contacted the *Washington*. Somewhere to the south the damaged battleship was limping along; a meeting was arranged. Close to Guadalcanal in the early morning the destroyer *Benham*, hit by a torpedo the night before, broke in two and sank. The *Gwinn*, sole survivor of our four destroyers, pulled off the *Benham's* crew.

As the *Washington* and *South Dakota* steamed to rejoin, the score for the night was totaled up. Alone the *Washington* had sunk one battleship, another battleship or heavy cruiser, and one destroyer. The *South Dakota's* guns had sent two more cruisers to the bottom, and our destroyers had also sunk a Jap destroyer. The combined fire of the *Washington* and *South Dakota* had sunk another cruiser. Two more cruisers, an undetermined number of destroyers, and nine transports and lighter craft had been severely damaged in the heavy fighting. The first surface engagement in modern naval history for U. S. battleships had proved their worth: they had saved our invasion of the Solomons.

The night battles off Guadalcanal presaged our push through the Pacific. They formed the culmination of the struggle that broke the back of Japan's naval power. Never again could the Japs muster enough force seriously to challenge our control of the sea. The climax of the Pacific naval war had been reached, and the Japs' strength on the sea was on the wane. The sea triumphs of the cruisers and of our force was one of the greatest clear-cut decisions of all times. The catastrophic Jap losses for both battles in sunken ships alone stood at two, possibly three battleships, six heavy cruisers, two light cruisers, six destroyers, eight transports with perhaps twenty-four thousand drowned men, and four cargo ships—a total of twenty-nine ships sunk. Against these serious Jap losses, two of our cruisers and seven destroyers were sunk. The calamity of the defeat suffered by the Jap fleet in the Guadalcanal battle probably explained

this masterpiece of understatement made at the time by the former Commander in Chief of the Japanese Navy, Admiral Sankicki Takashi, who said:

"We must reckon with further heavy fighting in the Solomons." The only ship unharmed by the slightest scratch in our battle was the *Washington*. Yet the tonnage of ships sunk and damaged by the deadly fire of her guns was the largest total that has ever been sunk by any one ship in a single engagement. It was a feat unequaled in the annals of Naval warfare. Never before had such first-class warships been smashed so quickly with no hurt to the victor. In three minutes of main-battery firing the *Washington* had sunk a Jap battleship or heavy cruiser in the opening phase of the battle. Later, when the *Kirishima* and the *Washington* came to blows, only five and one half minutes of firing time were necessary to rip the enemy ship to pieces and send her to the bottom. The other cruisers, destroyers, transports, and smaller ships that had been raked by our secondary battery were overwhelmed by such rapid firing that the Japs believed the Navy had developed a method for loading the five-inch guns like machine-guns.

Early in the forenoon of the day following the battle, when the *Washington* and *South Dakota* had joined just south of Guadalcanal, the colors of both ships were half-masted while the *South Dakota* buried her many gallant dead. And then the blinking signal lights began to flicker from the *Washington*.

"Take station for a main battery offset practice," read the message from Admiral Lee. Sure, the battle had been won the night before, but the war was not over. Any thoughts the crew might have had of being able to relax or rest on their laurels after soundly trouncing the Japs, was dispelled when the men were forced to go to their posts again for drill. The two ships separated, and at twenty-five thousand yards the *Washington* fired thunderous salvos at the *South Dakota's* wake. Like the night before, when not a single spot had been necessary, all salvos smacked into the wake for hits. The *Washington* still had its shooting eye.

AFTER THE MID-NOVEMBER actions, the naval fighting around the Solomons decreased in scope. While the smaller, but just as bloody sea-battles were being fought in the confined waters of the northern islands, the *Washington* patrolled near by but was never actively engaged. The Japs never again brought down any heavy ships to risk in battle.

Later in January of 1944 the invasion of the Marshalls was called for in the timetable of our Pacific commanders. The heart of these islands was a small sea bounded by the ring of strong enemy bases. Through the barrier and into the Japanese-controlled waters the *Washington* steamed with a carrier task force one dark night. At sunrise the carrier planes struck and within an hour control of the air was gained. An enemy tanker and three smaller craft were surprised and sunk by the murderous fire of the *Washington's* guns. One day before D Day the ship, which had been assigned the job of softening up the main Jap island of Kwajalein, began the bombardment which blanketed the enemies shore defenses. Two smothering sessions of bombardment interspersed with carrier plane assaults started tremendous fires on the atoll. In counter battery duels the *Washington's* guns smashed numerous Jap emplacements and positions. The Marshalls were soon overwhelmed and dominated by our fleet, which allowed the amphibious forces to storm ashore.

Leaving the Marshalls the tremendous invasion force headed westward. After four days of steaming undetected, the carrier planes filled the air as they took off and winged toward the Marianas. For two days the surprised Japs were plastered under a hail of destruction

from the air. Then the *Washington* with other fast battleships moved in for the final crushing blow. The battlewagons opened up with their big guns and pounded the shore defenses of Saipan and Tinian unmercifully. With the way paved by a tremendous tonnage of shells and explosives, the amphibious forces came up and began the assault. Relieved, the *Washington* with a carrier task force took station in the Philippine Sea to cover against any attempt by the Japs to lash out at ships massed for the landings.

IN SEPTEMBER OF 1944, while United States troops landed at Palau and Morotai, the *Washington* hovered in full sight of the coast of Luzon. It was the first surface force to come within sight of those lands since the Japs had won Bataan and Corregidor. When MacArthur and his troops poured ashore at Leyte, the *Washington* struck Formosa and Okinawa. Throughout the fall of 1944 the *Washington* was attached to carrier task forces which roamed unmolested and defiant west of the Philippines between our landing forces and the enemy.

When our troops landed in Lingayen Gulf in the Philippines, a task force containing the *Washington* entered the South China Sea and attacked Saigon and Hong Kong. It was the first surface force to come in sight of the eastern shores of the Continent of Asia. In February of 1945 came the great Tokyo raids. After fighting clear through the Pacific from the days of our first offensive at Guadalcanal, the *Washington* stood at last on the doorstep of the enemy's capital city. The *Washington* bombarded Iwo Jima on D Day and for three days later, as the Japs were rooted out of their caves by the immense weight of explosives. At Okinawa, during the bloodiest island fighting in the entire Pacific campaign, the *Washington* took her station to blast open a way for the advancing soldiers and marines. More Tokyo strikes, more China coast raids, and more bombardments continued to keep the *Washington* in the van as our air, land and sea forces forged ahead to victory.

And so through the great naval actions and operations of this war the ship has steamed, carrying the fight to the groggy enemy, who by now must curse the name "Washington." Although a probable total of six thousand Japs have been killed by the murderous fire of the *Washington*, not one single man aboard her has been lost to the enemy. She has been lucky, yes; but still such consistency of performance must reflect the caliber of her captain and her crew. On many occasions she might have been badly damaged or sunk; but always quick and accurate work by the ship has overpowered the enemy. The best defense is a good offense, and under the hammering of the *Washington's* guns, the enemy has never been given a chance to deliver a mortal blow.

The few men of the original crew that are still left aboard look back occasionally over their four years of history-making. As the few old-timers gather in some corner of the weather decks in the darkening light of evening, they think back to the early days of the ship. They remember when they reported aboard, new men being introduced to a new ship. The plank owners still get a thrill when they recall the day of the proud warship's commissioning. They wince when they think of the back-breaking labor and countless drills they endured to make the ship ready for war. They shiver when they recall the cold of the Arctic while they tried to cover the unfortunate Murmansk runs. But above all, they still feel the same old clutch of excitement when they remember that dark night off Savo Island in the Solomons as they watched and waited for the first sign of the Japs. And the men glow with pride as they recall how the murderous fire of the *Washington's* guns hacked and slashed at the Japanese battleship *Kirishima* as the tide of war was turned in the Pacific.

MANY words we use owe their being to men of talent and action, both creditable and odious. On the bright side, the Greek philosopher Plato lends his name to platonic love, an ideal of companionship between men and women not based on sex. A sinister etymology lurks behind the innocent word *derrick*. Derrick was a Seventeenth Century hangman operating on Tyburn Hill, a London gallows. He invented a sort of crane to help hoist his victims into position.

This quiz covers ten cases, both ancient and modern, of men's names that have entered our language.

Get seven right, regardless of spelling, and you are doing well. Eight to ten right means your mental furniture is in fine repair.

1. Any young man called by this name suggests gayety and charm, a sartorially elegant being whose main concern is dress. The original of the name was all of that, but his career was as tragic as *Pagliacci's*. Wit and fashion-pacer of George III's England, he was the crony of royalty, an army captain and *bon vivant*. His costume extravagances and gaming habits ran through a thirty-thousand-pound fortune. Fleeing his creditors, he finally wound up in debtors' prison, to be rescued by friends and allowed a pit-tance to live on. His spirit was broken, however, and he turned sloppy and unkempt. Bluntly, he was a bum. A fop no more, he died in a French insane asylum, ironic conclusion to a life of peacock vanity. But his name blooms forever, marking every dandy as a - - - - -

2. The art of boxing is manly, due to the scrupulous rules governing it. John Graham Chambers, English athlete and Cantabrigian, was first to define *amateur* in athletics and to formulate rules for the conduct of boxing. He did so in 1867 under the sponsorship and supervision of Sir John Sholto Douglas, peer of Scotland and peerless patron of the prize-ring. It is Douglas's name that identifies the famous rules. His noble title gave the sport gentlemanly impetus with the Marquis of - - - - - rules.

3. People are inclined to credit Rudyard Kipling with the popular name for the British soldier. In 1815, long before the barrack-room ballad-ear was born, the name was used as a sample in "The Soldier's Account Book," much as lawyers use the name *John Doe*. Kipling's poetic chronicles gave world-wide sweep to its fame, so that it is now familiar everywhere. Today, a British soldier is still a - - - - -

Man into Legend— IV

A Quiz about Names by JACK LUZZATTO

4. Ostracism of a dealer or person must be as old as man, though it was given a definite name in the Ireland of 1880. A retired British army captain was an agent for some estates in County Mayo, where he had great difficulty in settling the rent charges. The Irish Land League made things hot for him by threatening his life, tearing down fences and even trying to starve him out. Military force was required to get in his crops. From an active resistance to a person, the word has shifted in value to mean the "placing in Coventry" of any dealer or person. This form of public strike is now known by the ill-starred captain's name, - - - - -

5. A comparatively small detail of a painter's art is enough to place him in our language. A Seventeenth Century Flemish painter became a byword by virtue of his beards. Although he painted many religious pictures and portraits of royalty, his name is familiar even to the inartistic because of the trim whiskers in many of his works. Short, pointed chin adornments, neatly groomed, are trademarks for those who sport - - - - - beards.

6. A similar hirsute detail incorporated another painter's name into our tongue. An early Renaissance painter endowed his models with a beautiful coppery hue of hair. Fiction writers ever since have delighted to make heroines rejoice in hair of the same color. Now, any hair gleaming with a subdued tinge of red is known by this painter's name, in lower case, - - - - -

7. An English traveling agent is the father of modern touring. Nursing ideas in advance of his time, he created travel conditions much as Ford creates cars—in the mass, for the masses, and very good in the bargain. He began by chartering railroad trains for minor excursions, expanding to Continental and American travel. His in-

novations included guided tours, fixed hotel rates and economical charges—just what the modest traveler needed. Today, people are still embarking on - - - - -'s tours.

8. Each tide of war washes up new words on the strand of language, like *tank*, *flat-top*, *bazooka*, etc. More rarely, a man's name makes the grade, through the significance of his actions. The outstanding example of World War II is the Norwegian turncoat who rode the huge, deceptive wave of the Nazi future. His name is now applied to all traitors to their country, as a common word. Norway tried and condemned him as a - - - - -

9. Though acknowledged as a military genius, this Greek king's victories make the winning side shudder. Born more than three hundred years B. C., this king of Epirus trounced the Romans twice, at Heraclea and Asculum. About Asculum, he made the bitter, pointed remark that is now classic: "One more such victory over the Romans, and we are utterly undone." Every living general, friend or foe, heartily subscribes to his sentiments. Such dearly-bought battles are named after the Epirote king as - - - - - victories.

10. In an ancient country southeast of the Caspian Sea, a warlike race succumbed to the Persians and to the Greeks under Alexander, but successfully resisted the Romans. Their name comes down to us as a fine word because of their style of combat. They were archers exclusively, and fought on horseback like American Indians. This supposed Turkoman people had the peculiar tactic of letting fly with a shaft and then turning tail in bristling retreat. Because of these deadly leave-takings, any conversational arrow loosed by a departing speaker is called a - - - - - shot.

Answers:

1. Beau Brummell (George Bryan Brummell), 1778-1840.
2. Marquis of Queensberry. 1844-1900.
3. Tommy Atkins.
4. Boycott, Charles Cunningham, 1832-1897.
5. Vandyke or Van Dyck, Sir Anthony, 1599-1641.
6. Titian (Vecelli Tiziano). 1477-1576 (!).
7. Thomas Cook, 1808-1892.
8. Vidkun Quisling.
9. Pyrrhic, adjective from Pyrrhus, 318?-272 B. C.
10. Parthian, native of Parthia.

Viking Loot

IN ENGLAND OUR TREASURE-SEEKERS PUT THEIR
MINE-DETECTOR ON A STRANGE QUEST—AND
THEREBY HANGS THIS DRAMATIC TALE

by H. BEDFORD-JONES

THE three of us—I, Bill Carson, and his two pals, Murchison and the Vicomte de Gondy—sat in conference in the sunny land of France, reaching a vital decision.

"I'm fed up with it," snapped Murchison. "Let's go to England."

"There are difficulties," murmured Gondy thoughtfully: "The law and such things."

"Nonsense!" Murch was skinny, opinionated, and at times a stubborn ass. He and I had been pals from boyhood days, all through the war, and still were. He was a good guy. "We've been barging around Europe, and I'm sick of it. We run into trouble everywhere. Let's go back where people talk the same language."

"If you mean England, they don't," I put in with a chuckle. "I seem to remember, when we were billeted there, what a time you had trying to savvy those noncoms—"

Gondy's eyes, dark and brilliant, twinkled at us, but he said nothing.

"Look," went on Murchison: "This gadget of ours will locate buried treasure; we've proved it to the hilt. What happens? First, Gondy's ex-relative Félice tries to murder us all, and keeps after us. She knows what a big thing we have; she wants it herself, also the loot we dig up. And we hit nothing but trouble everywhere. I'm fed up with it. There's more buried treasure in England than in all France put together. Let's go back there."

Gondy nodded brightly. "Oh, that's true enough," he said. "Some enormous finds have been made. I know this minute of half a dozen possibilities, but—what d'ye say, Carson?"

I puffed at my pipe and considered this question. Murchison and I, through the war, had done laboratory work on mine-detectors, finally evolving a radionic detector that would do the job handily. Since then we had taken up one of our by-products, which was useless against mines, but

very useful in finding other things. With the Baby, as we called it, we had been knocking around Europe detecting buried treasure of one kind or another, and with plenty of luck, too. We had taken in Gondy to make a third, partly because we liked him, partly because he served as contact man and was useful in a dozen ways. As Murchison said, however, there were a few drawbacks, and chief among these was the beautiful and damned Félice.

"Well," I said at last, "the Continent won't budge, and we can always come back to it if we like. We've half the summer ahead of us; why not spend it in England, which is certainly no winter resort? We could move with the seasons, like the birds, going maybe to Egypt next winter. I'm for it. Anything against it, Gondy?"

He spread out his hands and shrugged, then reverted to the matter of the law, saying that we'd practically be outlaws in Egypt, were our errand known, for the Government came down hard on any treasure hunters.

"America is the only land of freedom," he said wistfully. "In England, the law is adamant; all treasure-trove belongs to the Crown, and the Crown insists unmercifully on its rights. So true is this, that even when there exists well-authenticated information about hidden treasure, the owner of the land usually refuses even to look for it—would do him no good."

Murchison picked up his ears. "Sounds fine," he said hopefully. "I know a guy back home in Boston who put himself through medical school in prohibition days, bootlegging. I bet more than one Britisher noses around and locates stuff and keeps his mouth shut."

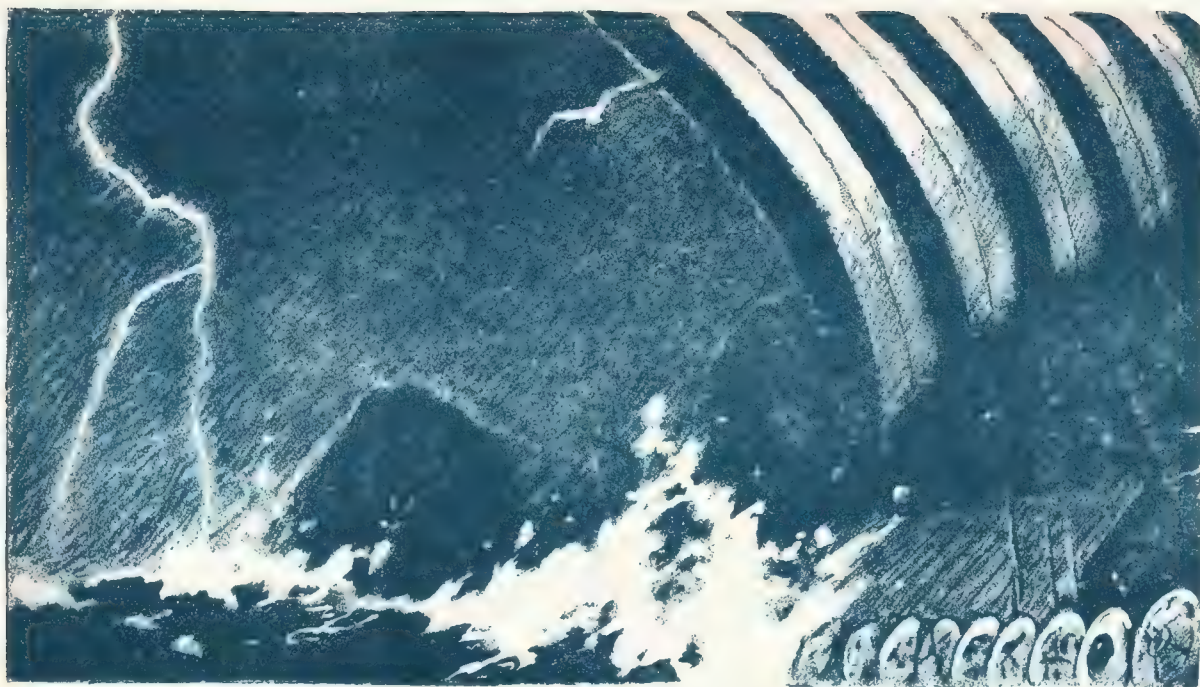
Gondy nodded. "I had a friend who found a little and knew where there's a lot more, when I was liaison officer with those British troops," he said. "Alan Cobham, his name was. He has a place in Sussex. However,



"What the devil are you chaps about



here?" the man on horseback demanded. He put his horse at me and motioned with his riding-crop.



anyone is free to search; the crime is concealment—"

"Wire him tonight," said Murch, rubbing his hands. "We can take the ferry from Havre to Southampton overnight—the Baby is a scientific invention, and the British customs won't bother us. Eh, Bill? It'll lend spice to the quest, if we have to do it on the quiet! Grow whiskers on the Baby, and pretend we're looking for oil!"

"Your spice will be hot pepper if we rub up against the wrong side of the British law," I said. "But so far as I'm concerned, wire your Sussex friend and let's go!"

Cobham wrote back a hearty invitation to us all, and that is how we came to be in Sussex.

IHARDLY know whether the men or place held more interest. Alan Cobham was sturdy, massive-faced, steady-eyed, a man of deep currents, of unswerving convictions, of slow and implacable nature; if your friend, he was your friend for life. He was not what the old-fashioned call a gentleman; rather, a rural farmer type. He had served in North Africa and Greece. The war had left him a major, with an ugly scar down one cheek. As Murchison put it, he was one grand guy. His place was called Inchgore; the house was several hundred years old, and serviced daily by a couple of women from the village. He was a bachelor. His place grew hops.

From his house on the hill we could see the glint of the sea; once it had extended up the valley, and where the village now stood had been a deep harbor in Roman days. He indicated

the old sea-line to us, and pointed out a rising clump of broken, naked granite at the edge of his hop-field.

"That used to be a sunken reef; it destroyed many a ship," he said, puffing at his big pipe. "Things have been found about there. The year the war started we were digging a drain-ditch past the Beacon, as it's known around here. I suppose a beacon for ships stood there in King Alfred's time. We turned up this."

He pointed to what stood above the fireplace.

This house, Inchgore, was one of the wonderful old things that abound in England. It had been a tithe-barn, whatever that is, in Elizabethan days. It had enormous beams, black with the years, but was a bit of a patchwork—the walls largely of Caen stone from France, yellowed with lichens and sea-winds' weathering. The thing above the fireplace was of a piece with the house.

It was large, curved, shapen piece of wood, another piece projecting from one end and held by a bolt. The wood was worm-holed and rot had thinned the wood to nothing.

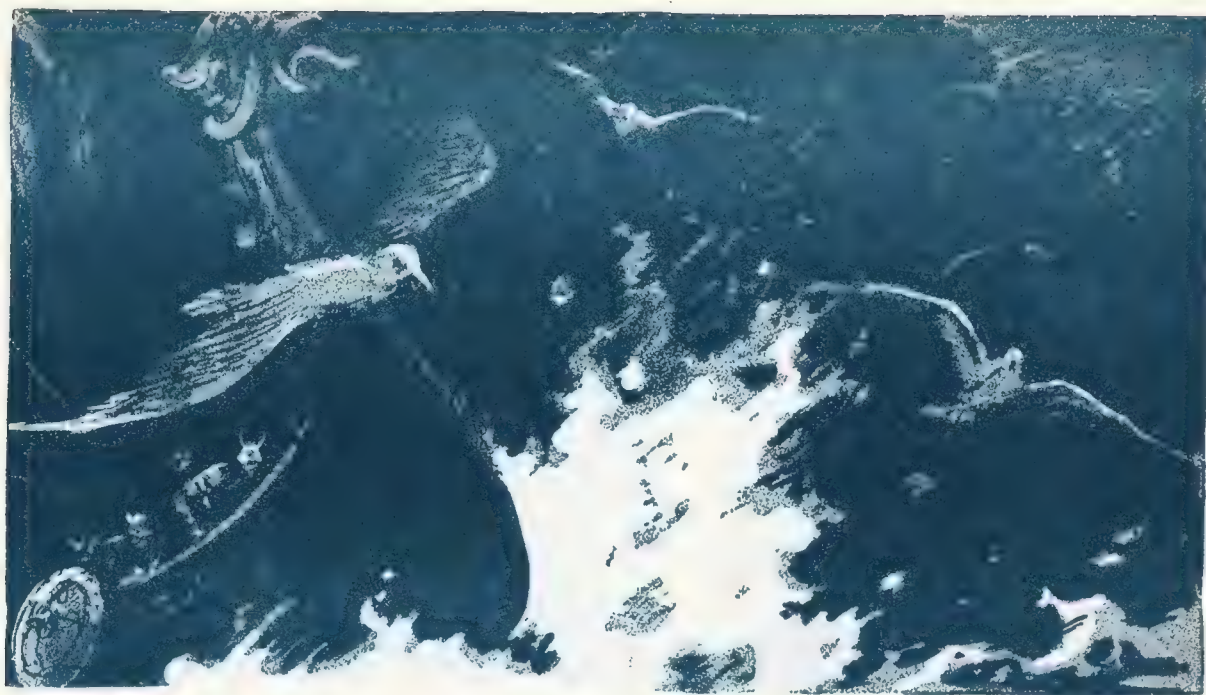
"An odd thing, that," said Cobham. He was well educated; his speech held none of the local patois which was past comprehension to American ears. "An archæologist chap was down from London and saw it. Said it was the prow of a ship, probably a Viking ship wrecked on the Beacon, since the bolt you see is of bronze. . . . Well, that's one thing. Another is that, almost at the identical spot, old Watt Chod-sale struck upon something thirty-odd years ago; he picked up the head of a crosier and got thirty shillings for it

from a shopman in Barnsdale. From what I gather, the thing must have been solid gold. And there's the makings of my treasure-trove—at least, I call it mine."

WE looked at the sheltered hop-fields, known locally as the Marsh—odd, how the memory of long-past centuries survives in these local English names! Alan Cobham talked, slowly and steadily unrolling ancient things to us. It was a touchy business, he said, to talk of treasure-trove these days. A man could go to prison, even after the lapse of years, for finding and keeping anything worth while. I got the impression that he had enemies who might well turn him in. It was our first hint that he, even as many another man, might have a past that was like a quagmire under his feet, ready to swallow him up at a false step. He went on about the crosier that had been found.

"It must have belonged to an abbot or bishop. There was a big abbey here in Saxon times, Bosham Abbey; not a stone of it left now. The Danes or Vikings sacked and burned it. Tradition, often more accurate than history, says the Viking ship with its loot ran on the Beacon reef and was lost."

Vikings and loot were gone. The sea had receded during the centuries. An abbot's crosier had been picked up; at the same place had been found the curved prow of a Viking ship—and here we were. Fantastic? Not in England, which has more verified treasure fantasy than any other country on earth. The solid, sensible man sitting there and telling about it, made the thing seem entirely probable.



Cobham had never dug for the ship. Everyone here knew everybody else's business; excavations might be a lengthy business and a ruinous one in the end. He knew the location in general but this did not say the treasure lay there—the ship might have broken in two on the rocks or been carried afar. If someone knew the exact spot, it would be different; and the exact spot might be found by Murchison & Co.

"Here's my notion," our host concluded, "Next Monday will be Bank Holiday; between Saturday and Tuesday, there'll be no work in the fields. This gives you the better part of a week to grub around with your machine. Locate the spot and leave it until Saturday night; dig it up and have the ground smoothed over by Tuesday—and no work by daylight, mind. To account for your presence, I can say you're taking soil samples for the Hop Marketing Board or any such damned thing. Suppose we have a look over the spot here and now."

We tramped off with him, gladly.

COBHAM knew somewhat how we meant to work, but took no interest; he cared only for the result. I believe he regarded us as slightly crazy anyhow; soldiers usually thought us technical experts a bit balmy. In a good-humored, offhand way, he had agreed to an equal division of any spoils among the four of us—a fourth to him.

So we went tramping with him through the fields to the Beacon. As we got there, an elderly workman came plodding along, and saluted him respectfully. Cobham stopped.

"Morning, Humfry. I hear your rascally sheep-growing master has battered down my fences and the lower marsh gate."

"It were the lorry, Maas' Alan," said the man apologetically in broad dialect. "The lorry ta-akin' the tegs up above. What wi' the drythe and heat, there's little grass left down below. The lorry—well, it bumped the gate-posts a bit."

"Aye, and then some," Cobham said angrily. "Tell Greg if the repairs aren't done by the week-end, I'll close the way completely, and he can send his damned tegs to the upper meadows through the air, and himself with them."

The old fellow regarded him with a shake of the head and a rather proud look.

"Maas' Greg won't be loiking that, Maas' Alan—"

"To hell with him and his likes!" snapped Cobham. "Tell him that, too, Humfry."

"An't loikly; queers me, it does, how he do go on, and you too—and her dead and gone these long years! Her wouldn't loike that, and her a-praying—"

Cobham shut him up with an oath, and he went his way. Our host had shown an ugly side of him; but next minute he was drawling and humorous as ever, and pointed out to us a spot here and a spot there, as we stood under the long pile of rocks that had been an ocean reef in the dim dead past. He marked with a hop-pole the exact place he had dug up the ship's prow, and showed where in a little hollow close by the crosier had been found.

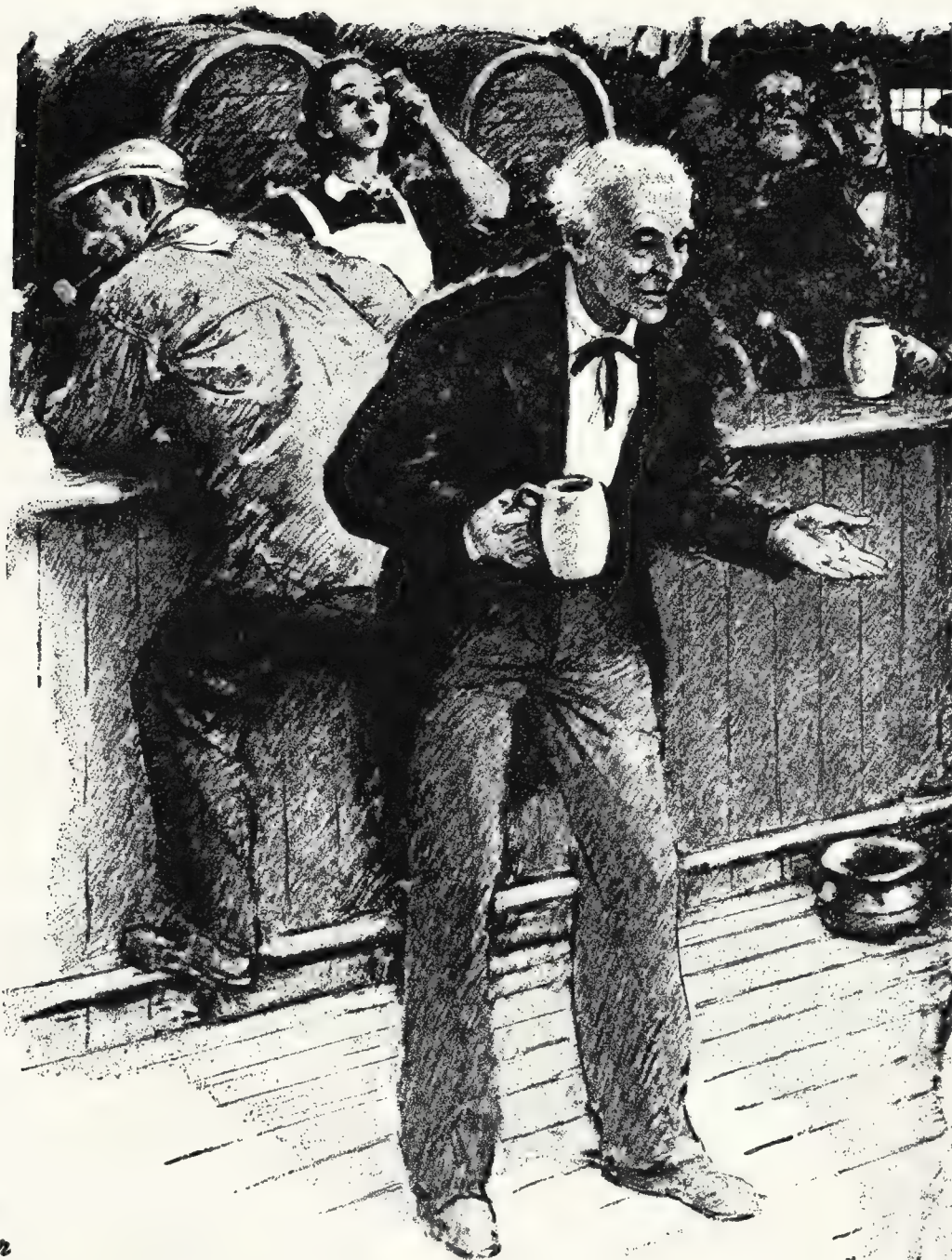
It seemed incredible. Here was plain earth, the sea far away; yet under our feet must be the rust and rot of a Viking ship of a thousand years ago. I found it past belief, but not so Murchison and Gondy. They were two of a kind, given to wild dreams. Just before the war Murch had sunk all his savings in a Cape Cod cat-and-rat fur farm—skin the cat and feed the carcass to the rats, and vice versa; and he was still trying to figure out why he was not rich. But he was a great guy, and in radionics a five-star wizard. It was Murch who first figured out how a bat flies by radar principles, and harnessed them.

OUR host made it quite plain that, to avoid local gossip and consequent trouble, we must locate the treasure with due precaution, and then dig like blazes when we dug, and cover up fast; years afterward, if it got a whiff of treasure, the Crown would prosecute. So, for Cobham's sake as well as our own, we had to watch our step.

That evening—it was a Sunday we arrived—Cobham went to the village, to church, being a religious soul; and the three of us went into executive session. The Baby was mounted in a wicker perambulator, hence the name, for greater convenience of operation, but this now promised to have its drawbacks.

"Pushing a pram around those fields will draw attention," said Gondy.

"I'll say!" assented Murchison. "Imagine, Bill, the gossip in a New England village if strange guys turned up and began showing a baby carriage around Abel Smith's cornfield! Still,



*Illustrated by
Maurice Bower*

that's the easiest way to do our job. Looks like we must work at night."

"That won't be so tough," I said. "We've got good weather. It's all clear and open under those rocks; the spot doesn't lie out in the field, but close to the Beacon."

"With a time limit on the job for best results," added Murchison. "Well, we can work all night if we want, so we'd better go at it tomorrow night after dark, when the two women have gone back to the village and the coast is clear. We'll have to install those

new batteries in the Baby and put the thing together. Might do that now."

"We set about it, having the place to ourselves. The Baby had been taken apart and packed in the back of our old but sturdy Fiat, and by the time Cobham returned we had it put together and in good working order. Cobham suggested that we keep the gadget in our car, with a cloth thrown over it, since workmen or the two servants might otherwise get to wondering what we were doing with a perambulator.

Next afternoon—early, because of the English closing hours—we three walked to the village, half a mile away, for a look around. We found the pub and settled down, found the local beer to be excellent, and listened to the wholly unintelligible Sussex talk of those around, which amused us.

After a bit in came an odd little old chap who got a mug of half-and-half, looked around, and brought his mug of to our table. He had wild gray hair,



that bit of ground is still a big honeypool; but it's been a dry year. I did know some odd things about there, but they've gone out of my head. One of those bloody buzz-bombs, during the trouble, hit my cottage and killed my wife, and I've hardly been the same man since."

"Honeypools?" Murchison stuck to it in his stubborn way. "What may that mean?"

The bright little eyes twinkled at us, merrily enough.

"That's local speech. Mud-puddles, by way of translation. Strangers always like the sound of it. I used to be up at the Beacon a good deal. I still slip up there now and then, on

"A buzz-bomb killed my wife, and I've hardly been the same man since," said the old chap.

a bright and kindly eye, and a face like a wizened apple.

"D'you mind if I sit with you?" he said in excellent English. "I'm Alf Meghorn and a bit of an antiquary, and I like to tell strangers about our local antiquities."

We gave our names, shook hands, and made him welcome. I saw the barmaid catch Gondy's eye—they always did—and tap her temple significantly in warning. Our new friend

made some brisk talk about Americans.

"You're the chaps staying with Alan Cobham, eh?" he went on. "Interesting, very. I saw you looking over the honeypools with him yesterday."

"Honeypools?" repeated Murchison blankly. "I don't get it."

"That's what the bit of the marsh under the Beacon used to be called," Meghorn explained. "Interesting bit of tradition there. After a heavy rain

watch, but so far I've never had any luck."

"On what kind of watch?" I asked.

"Well, you know tradition, in this country, is usually based on fact," he said very seriously. "For hundreds of years tradition has said that the Beacon is haunted by the ghosts of people drowned there when the sea was up around the rocks. I've kept on the lookout a many nights, but never saw a ghost. Greg Cobham laid his bull-

whip to me once," he added, a sudden deadly flash in his eye, "but Alan doesn't mind. If Greg hated to have me prying around of nights, as he put it, that would make Alan give me permission."

In the next twenty minutes we learned a lot of surprising things.

COBHAM had a younger brother, Greg. They had been enemies from youth, when Greg had married Alan's girl. The Cobham inheritance had been split, causing further ill-will; an unusual thing in England, for Alan should have inherited all. The two brothers had staged some elegant battles, we gathered, until the war came along with a bigger one. Greg's wife had died during the war. According to our informant, Greg was a slippery rascal.

Pub closing-time ended our talk. I rather liked this Meghorn chap; there was something quite gentle and kindly about him, cracked or not. At that, many a crackpot has better sense than some of the normals around him. Under his wrecked life, Meghorn had a lot of basically sound stuff. However, we had more important matters on hand than confabbing with a village nitwit, and Alan Cobham's family affairs were none of our business, so we dismissed the whole affair from mind—or at least, I did.

That night after the two servants went home, we got down to work. Cobham, who made no great company of us and regarded our work with an amused tolerance, went off to a political meeting—one of those granges or rural boards that keep English farmers regimented.

An old moon hung in the sky as we trundled the Baby down the path and through the field and to the Beacon. Murchison, who was a little moon-mad anyhow, pointed to the jagged line of rocks.

"There's something you can't see by daylight," he chirped. "The old water-line. See it? Part way down the rocks."

Gondy did. I did not.

"You'll be seeing ghosts next, you and Alf Meghorn," I told him. "No sense in all of us staying here all night. We'd better take two-hour shifts, after we get things going, and those not working can stay at the house."

"Not so easy, Mr. Carson, when we work at night," retorted Murch. "You, for instance, need watching. There's a lot of ground to be covered. The guy walking the Baby can't easily determine his own bounds; someone must keep score from the side lines."

"As usual, your maunderings make sense," I conceded.

We had already calculated that treasure possibilities would be confined within a rough triangle. The base would be some two hundred yards

along the Beacon rocks, centered on the spots indicated by Cobham; the search, naturally, would begin there. The point of the triangle, a hundred feet away, would fan out to this base line. Within this space ought to lie whatever remains might exist of any ships wrecked on the Beacon.

I could take no stock whatever in the whole business; it was too full of moonshine. For this special reason, Gondy and Murchison were nuts about it. Anything that required strong imagination appealed to them. Gondy even took the notion that the crevices among that long pile of rocks must hold countless objects that had been washed ashore; to hear him talk, one would have thought it was only last week the sea was washing around here. Murchison took up this utterly insane notion and elaborated on it until I lost my temper and we went into a good row.

From boyhood days in South Boston, Murch and I had been pals. We got rid of a lot of combat instinct on each other. Because we never got on each other's nerves, our rows always ended well, provided no one else chipped in. This was a really good one and we worked off a lot of steam, and Gondy had the sense to keep out. So it was pretty near midnight when we actually got down to work, and along came Cobham, his meeting ended, to see what we were at. He laughed immoderately at our squabble and stuck around to see how we operated, and laughed anew to see me rolling a pram along the ground.

To do him justice, he was amazingly quick to catch on. During the war he had picked up some knowledge of radar and of electronics in general, naturally. Murchison's example of how the bat flies, guided by supersonic waves, made clear how such waves could penetrate the solid earth and bounce back upon striking a still more solid obstacle.

As we worked along, I explained to him how, upon encountering any underground substance, the rays would register on the dials, and how we had from these registrations evolved a chart that would show the nature of the object and its depth. He quite comprehended that the force of the kickback would depend on the solidity of the object struck; in fact, without knowing an actual thing about it, he had the principle down pat.

"I can give you a bit of help there," he volunteered. "I know there's a stratum of solid rock at varying distances underground, deepening as you get away from the Beacon. Any ship sinking through the mud in ancient days would lie on it."

"A ship might take a century sinking that way, or might not sink at all," put in Gondy, with reason.

"True; it's all a gamble," said Cobham.

He was interested enough to stay with us, and suggested that we come here by daylight and outline, by means of stones placed for markers, the patch of ground to be covered at night; a good idea. We got the Baby adjusted to work at a depth of from six to twenty feet, and in the immediate vicinity of where the ship's prow had been found, the buzzer indicated strike after strike, but nothing to get excited about—rock or logs. Cobham confirmed this. Huge witch-elms had once grown along here, he said, so long ago that when the logs were dug up they usually turned to powder after reaching the air.

We stayed at it until three in the morning and then knocked off, all of us, after making careful observations of the ground covered, so we would not go over it twice. As we pushed the Baby home, I pointed out that there must have been a current washing along these rocks, and consequently anything sunk there would have been carried far.

"I never saw such a man for relentless logic," grunted Murchison resignedly.

Cobham laughed. "Well, the best answer to that is the ship's prow at the house, what?"

True enough, or so it seemed at the moment.

We turned in and slept until noon. It was hot, dry weather. In the cool of the afternoon we sauntered off to the Beacon and made a mental layout of what ground we had covered and the amount we would cover tonight, and marked it with stones large enough to see later on. While we were at this, we walked into something—rather, it rode into us.

A MAN on horseback, a big brawny man on a fine horse, came along and pulled up. The man was young, under thirty, and well-dressed in a British way.

"What the devil are you chaps about here?" he demanded. His voice had a rasp to it that lifted my hackles. He was good-looking; I should have answered with the politeness becoming a foreigner. Instead, I did not. He put his horse at me and motioned with his riding-crop.

"Careful," I said, seeing Murch on the run. "Any arrogant misconception of what an important person you are, and you'll maybe get a broken neck."

I did not use those exact words, but shorter and less polite ones, being angry. The man drew rein and turned his horse, and waited. I saw Cobham coming out of nowhere—he had not been with us. He strode along at the soldier's double. The visitor barked out at him.

"I heard you had foreigners looking over the land, Alan. Came to see why."

Cobham halted. "No affair of yours, nor the land neither."

"So? And what's this message Humfry brought, about closing the thoroughfare?"

"Apparently you got it diluted," said Greg Cobham. "I said either repair the damages your lorry caused by this week-end, or your damned sheep and you together could go to hell by some farther way."

So this was the younger brother!

"The damage will be repaired," said Greg Cobham. "But not because of your threats, my loving brother! Save them for strangers. Because I prefer to have the property in good repair when it reverts to me, that's why. As it will when the gallows gets its due."

Alan squinted up at his brother. "You're in one of your pleasant moods today, Greg."

Greg snarled nastily. "I suppose you set that addleheaded Alf Meghorn on me with his blasted prescription?" As he spoke, he balled up a piece of paper in his hand, angrily. "It'd be like your bloody cheek!" He flung the ball at his brother.

"Oh, is that it?" Alan laughed. "Aye, he gave me a copy of it too. Said it'd serve to avert trouble between us if we followed it. Does his nonsense trouble your conscience?"

"You be damned! Nan always said you'd come to a bad end," blared Greg furiously. I saw Alan go dead white. "Pity the war didn't leave you in Africa!"

"We're not alone, Greg," replied our host slowly. "However, these friends of mine are gentlemen—too much so to be introduced to you. I don't care to pull you off your nag and brawl; but if you'll step down, I'll give you a thrashing that'll leave your ugly hulk of a body in the shape it should be!"

The sudden gusty fury breaking through his last words was a revelation. Greg looked down at him, snarled out a grin, and picked up his reins.

"This big lump of clay with an American brogue," he said, indicating me, "hinted at the same thing. He might scalp me. So, not being among friends—"

"Wait just a moment, please," said our host quietly. "Greg, you've just done something. Well, I warn you here and now: Drag her name into it again, and I'll kill you. Do you understand? Kill you like the cur you are."

He was quiet enough, his voice was quiet, but he was shaking, too. There was death in the air that very minute. The man in the saddle felt it and was afraid, and licked his lips;

then, with a lusty growling oath, turned his horse and rode away. Alan Cobham stood unmoving, looking after him.

I picked up the balled paper, which was at my feet, and opened it, Gondy and Murch at my elbow.

Cobham turned to us.

"I'm sorry about this; unpleasant scene, very," he said. "Oh, read the damned thing if you like! That poor chap in the village—got buzz-bombed during the war—lost his wits, thinks he's an evangelist or something."

IT was a single amazing paragraph scrawled on the paper; harmless, of course, just the sort of harmless nonsense a village nitwit might hand out to avert trouble. It read:

PRESCRIPTION

An ounce of faith, a shake of hope, much charity, well mixed. Season with as much careful thought for others as may fill the mind. Add to this a quantity of precaution never to speak hastily except when speaking kindly. Over all, sprinkle with a suspicion that each word uttered by the mouth of Man reaches the ear of God.

"'Allo!" said Gondy. This was the only English word he could never pronounce. "'Allo! I like this. I'd like to take a copy, Cobham, if you don't mind! It's not half bad, really."

"Keep it if you like." Cobham shrugged. "I must apologize, my friends. That chap is my brother, I regret to say. We've never got along. He wangled a nice cushy berth during the war—oh, to the devil with it! Let's forget it, eh? See here, I'm having Anna leave a cold snack for you in the kitchen tonight. Might slip my mind later, so I mention it now. If you're bloody asses enough to work like you did last night, a bite to eat around midnight will pull the old heart up enormously! And what about coffee?"

"We'll make that ourselves, thanks a lot," I told him, mindful of English coffee. "Come along home; it's time you knocked off, and we might have a rubber of bridge."

None of us forgot that scene, of course, but we eased it for him quite well, and after supper Gondy walked down with him to the village while Murchison and I took the first trick with the Baby.

"I was talking with the cook today," Murch confided to me, as we trundled the Baby toward the Beacon. "Good old soul. She said Master was dead in love with the girl who took the other guy, and the girl loved him, but this Greg worked some shenanigan. And they got word Alan was dead in Africa and it killed her.

There's a hell of a lot behind the whole situation, Bill."

"You're getting to understand the English dialect," I said dryly.

He chuckled. "Oh, Cook can talk proper English if she wants! She nearly married a technical sergeant from Brooklyn, during the war, only it turned out he had a couple wives already. You sort of blew off your top today, didn't you? Too bad our host stopped the show."

"Damned good thing for that blighter Greg," I said.

The moon was older and higher. Up and down we walked the Baby, hour after hour. Gondy came back and took his turn. He turned up trees, bedrock, more trees, and never a suspicion of metal. Around midnight we broke off for the waiting snack, then stuck out the rest of the night in starry darkness with the moon sunken and gone. We had no luck whatever.

Wednesday we slept until noon, brunched with Cobham, then spent an hour going over the ground, laying out the night's work and marking it off. We had now covered the likeliest spots, finding nothing. The bedrock lay at uneven depths, and was a nuisance. If we adjusted the machine to work too low, the buzzer would sound all the time, as the rays struck rock and kicked back; if not low enough, we might miss what we sought. As a detector, our gadget had its disadvantages, and we were continually trying to overcome them, because we intended to put the thing on the market for commercial use, in course of time.

Gondy offered the bright suggestion that we might adjust the waves so that they would ignore rock, be immune to it, as it were. A mere matter of adjusting them to rebound from the molecular construction of metal and nothing else, he said. This was so damned fantastic that Murchison admitted it was possible, theoretically. Being a very practical person I put my foot down hard, and for an hour or so we had as hot an argument as ever was. Then, as he usually did, Murch came up with a truly sound idea.

"If bedrock lies all along here, Bill, it would have been well scoured when the tide swept around these rocks. Let's go find Meghorn, the antiquary chap!"

"Why him?" I grunted.

"He knows all this country. He can sketch for us the old shoreline in ancient days. Then we can figure the possible drift and currents—"

THAT was really something. I was deputed to the job, so off I went to the village.

Meghorn's house was partly ruins, partly an old British Army hut moved on the lot after the buzz-bombs had

hit. Alf was digging in his vegetable garden out back. When he savvied what I was after, he beamed all over to be taken for a real antiquarian. I saw that one side of his face was bruised and swollen, but made no comment.

I got in some beer, he dug up an old Ordnance map of the district, and we settled down in his rather messy place to work. He sketched out where the old shoreline had run, making a very nice job of it, and showed me his antiquities—Roman coins, bits of carved stone, pottery and so forth. I asked how he had hurt his face, and he reddened.

"By not minding my own business," he said.

"I read that thing you gave Cobham," I told him. "That prescription. It was a good thing in its way, but wasted on those hard-headed chaps. You're something of a poet, eh?"

THIS pleased him no end, and he grew confidential.

"I'm not a busybody, really," he told me, "but I've tried hard to keep those two from doing murder; that's what I'm afraid of. Greg is an ugly blighter." He touched his hurt cheek. "He gave me a lesson today, right enough. You see, this is the danger period."

"I don't understand."

"Greg married Nan Evarts; she and

Alan were in love, but Greg wangled some sort of a slimy scheme and tricked her. A report came that Alan was killed in Africa, and she didn't survive long after that. Tomorrow is the anniversary of her death. Alan put flowers on her grave last year, and it drove Greg into a fury, and they had a row. If Alan does the same thing tomorrow, anything may happen. 'Twould be no loss if Greg were killed, but I'd be sorry to see Alan Cobham swing for it; he's a fine sort."

"Oh!" I said. "And you've been trying to plant noble sentiments instead of hatred in their hearts, eh?"

"There's not much I can do," he said, and sighed. "I've known 'em since they were little tykes; I can in-



We got the Baby adjusted to work, but found nothing of value.



fluence Alan, but not Greg. It's a mortal bad situation, Mr. Carson. And I've not been too strong i' the head since that buzz-bomb landed here. If you could keep your eye on Alan in the next day or two, it'd be a good deed."

"Cobham rather goes his own way; we don't see much of him," I responded, and got away before he could inveigle me into any promises. I mind my own business, mostly.

BACK in the cool room of Inchgore, we figured over the map until it became obvious that there must have been a scouring tide-rip past the Beacon that had dug out a big section of the higher land this way from the Marsh. We deduced that there must have been a huge eddy at this end of the Beacon, making a quiet backwash where all sorts of things might well have been carried and deposited.

Alan Cobham got into the argument, saying our theory was disproved by his finding that ship-prow where he had. Gondy, who had a flood of words that would drown a phonograph, talked our host into a daze. However, we agreed to finish first with the triangle we had laid out at the start of our search.

Just before dark, we went down to look over the ground itself, and it was not hard to pick out the likeliest spot where the supposed backwash might have been. This was an unproductive corner of Cobham's land overgrown with saplings and brambles. Every nook of these Sussex farmlands had its own traditional name; and this bit, according to our host, had formerly been called Hortel's Shaw, now degenerated into Horlshaw, as nearly as we could get it. Probably some wandering minstrel named Hortel had camped there five or six hundred years ago, and ever since it had been Hortel's Shaw or thicket.

This Wednesday night we worked like dogs right up until dawn, going over the remainder of our triangle near the Beacon; we found nothing except an old iron kettle full of holes, indicating that our guess might be right and anything there had been scoured away. So far as I was concerned, that finished it; the whole layout was cockeyed and I would be delighted to chuck it. However, I said nothing.

We were through here; we had Thursday and Friday nights left, the week-end holiday ahead, and Hortel's Shaw to examine; this would finish it. We might have worked in that thicket by daylight, it seemed, but Cobham advised against it; too many village eyes at work, said he, and as it proved he was right.

So we slept most of Thursday, seeing little of Cobham. After supper

he disappeared, and when the help had gone home we buckled down to the task ahead.

In that cursed thicket we could not hope to cover the ground thoroughly; we could only blunder around in general. We had been using a flashlight to read the chart upon getting any reaction, but on quitting work at dawn I had left it behind a rock at the base of the Beacon, forgetting it there. So while Murchison was walking the Baby in the thicket, I went to the Beacon for the flashlight. The waning moon was thin and high and bright in the west. After locating the light, I paused to get a cigarette going.

"Hi!" came a voice over my head. I responded. There was a clatter, and down from the rocks came Alf Meghorn.

"Thought you were a ghost, but ghosts don't smoke," said he, chuckling. I gave him a cigarette and asked what he was doing here.

"Oh, watching. Bill Bunthorn came home from Whitby late last night, well liquored. He cut across the marsh and swears he saw ghosts moving around. So I came to watch."

Some drunken villager had spied us, at work and had taken us for ghosts.

"There's bad things brewing," went on Meghorn, as we chatted. "Greg Cobham has been drinking hard all day, full o' fire and threats. Where's Alan?"

Not knowing, I said so. "He'd better have a care," said Meghorn, wagging his head. "Greg will be in a fine stew tomorrow; allus is, after a drinking bout. Well, I'm going to watch till midnight. Ghosts come of a fine night like this, by all accounts."

He clambered back among the rocks, and I returned to Hortel's Shaw.

Something around an hour later, I remember, Murchison finished his trick and was going back to the house, and paused to give us a lecture on survival. We need not expect, said he, to find any bones or armor. Iron goes to rust underground, copper corrodes to nothing, wood rots like bone. If we struck the treasure, it would be all silver, which may tarnish but remains intact, or all gold, which is not affected—

Just then the buzzer indicated a find at the edge of some bramble bushes. Gondy was at the machine. Thinking he had struck a rock, he ran the Baby along for a foot or so—and the buzzer continued sounding. I came with the flashlight, glanced at the gauges, then took another incredulous look.

"Glory be, boys! Metal at four feet down—and a lot of it! Apparently loose metal, for the dials jiggle, instead of registering a distinct level such as a chest or sheet of iron—"

We were excited; we always were, upon making discoveries. The thrill

never palled on us; even when the discovery proved worthless, we got a tremendous kick out of it. Murchison proposed, since the night was still early and the find a shallow one, that we dig for it here and now. No one objected. Gondy and I started home with the Baby, to leave it and get shovels, while Murchison marked the spot and stayed with it.

We found Cobham not yet home, got the pick and shovels, and got back to the shaw in a hurry. The moon was too low in the west to reach through the saplings; the ground was dark, and we dared not use the flashlight too much. But we had to go only four feet down—and we felt it before we saw it. Felt it, heard the click-click—a bed of coins lying loose in the dirt. Once they must have been confined in something, perhaps a leather sack, a huge one. Gondy got two jute sacks from the house and we filled them both and dragged them home, figuring that before morning we would return and fill in the ground.

The dining-room opened off the living-room; we dumped the coins on the big table. There were thousands of them, all gold and silver; and among the coins were brooches and rings and crosses and chains, all of gold. It was the sort of thing you dream about. The silver was blackened, of course; the gold glinted yellow and bright. Gondy picked up a few of the coins and shook his head.

"They look Roman; I can't tell. If we— 'Allo!'"

COBHAM came walking in. He looked tired and old, and had a badly bruised cheek.

"So here you are!" he exclaimed. "I went walking—had a row on the way; beastly mess all around, I'm afraid. Oh, I say—Good Lord!"

He saw the coins and stood stupefied.

For as much as twenty minutes we all had a hilarious time. He lugged out a cask of beer and broached it, and drank healths and talked big. Alan Cobham became another man, blithe and eager; but once he touched his bruised cheek and his face darkened ominously. We played like boys with the treasure, then started to separate the gold from the silver. While we were at this, the knocker on the big front door began to hammer. We gasped, looked at one another guiltily, and I grabbed a sack and flung it over the table.

Our host walked out into the living-room, and we followed, just in time to see the front door burst inward. Across the threshold flung Greg Cobham, a shotgun over his arm. He looked like a madman. Blood was on his face, and his hair flew wild. He was not drunk nor sober, but in the aftermath of heavy drinking, and

at the brink of insanity with sheer blind fury. He stopped short, glaring at Alan.

"I've come for you!" he blurted out.

"Easy on, old fellow," said Alan. "Just because I had to knock you down doesn't call for a gun, Greg. Put it down, and I'll give you another knockdown if you like—"

"You bloody mucker, what business have you putting flowers on her grave?" cried Greg furiously. "I've told you to leave her alone. She was my wife, not yours. I've had enough, and this is the end. I'll do for you now if I swing for it!"

ALAN walked toward him calmly. "You're out of your head, Greg," he said steadily. "I've had enough of your drunken ways, too, but murder is murder, you know—"

Greg threw up the gun, and the hammer clicked as he cocked it.

"You lie! You threatened to kill me. You'd like to do it, so Cobham Farm could all be yours and me out o' the way. You'll not do it! I'm the one that'll inherit the whole place, damn you!"

"Stop your raving," Alan continued his approach. "There'll be no murder done here. Put up the gun. We settled it with our fists once to-night, and if you want to do it again, I suppose we must."

"Aye, and I went home for the gun, and I'll settle you once and for all, damn you!" raved Greg, his eyes blazing. Murchison and I had begun to circle around him, and he saw us and swung the muzzle toward us. "Look out, you damned Americans! Keep your distance, or you'll get a dose of the same—"

Alan jumped at Greg, striking the gun aside.

One shell exploded with a tremendous roar, but harmlessly, the shot peppering the big rafters. Then the two men were reeling, locked together, fighting for the gun, and doing it with such insensate ferocity that neither Murchison nor I, hoping to disarm the drunken fool, could intervene.

Suddenly I saw an opening, and dived in. Murchison acted at the same instant. Our combined weight sent the two of them crashing into a chair, and we all came down in one mad tangle. But the crash had a terrific echo, as the other barrel of the shotgun exploded. And the charge tore out Greg Cobham's throat. . . .

There was a phone in the house, and Alan called the local constable, who came along and brought a Sir John somebody, the local magistrate, and a dozen more people came trooping in. Meantime, Gundy had rammed the coins into the sacks again and stuck them into a corner of the dining-room out of sight—unluckily missing a few that rolled on the floor.

The corpse of Greg still had the gun clenched in his hands, and this saved the day for Alan. An hour or so later the county coroner came along. Our testimony had been taken down in detail. There was a powwow, and Sir John came over and clapped Alan on the shoulder, cordially, and told him to cheer up, that the verdict was certain to be either "accidentally shot" or "by his own hand," and Alan would be held blameless.

Then I saw the constable beckon Sir John out into the dining-room and knew the worst must have happened.

Cobham only stifled a groan when I told him.

"What does it matter, Carson? The dug-up ground would be discovered anyhow. We can't hope to hide the find. Hand it over, and devil take it. The main thing is to protect you three chaps; that can be managed."

Sir John came back, presently, looking grave.

"Sorry, Cobham—deuced amazing thing, 'pon my word!" he said. "These coins in yonder: It means a charge of concealing treasure-trove—they'll have to be impounded for the Crown till we can get a Treasury man down from London—"

We explained that we had only located the treasure this same night, and cooked up a plausible yarn about accidentally happening on it and so forth. The magistrate shook his head. There it had been in the dining-room, concealed; and the Crown was damned set on making examples, in order to frighten everyone else into turning in whatever they found.

So the crowd was cleared out, the body removed, and Sir John departed with our find packed into his car. He had examined some of the coins, knew quite a bit about them, and said that all were very old, Roman or Saxon in origin; a most valuable find.

The four of us sat drinking beer, Cobham trying to console us, and we trying to hearten him. The poor fellow was pretty low, and no wonder; however, he was lucky that there would be no murder charge—this had been made plain. While we were talking, came a knock at the door and here was old Alf Meghorn, drawn by the lights and commotion.

Cobham brought him in and set a mug of beer for him. We had to tell about the treasure, of course; I had some loose coins in my pocket and he fingered them. Suddenly his bright little eyes struck up at us.

"Cobham! You need a lawyer. Get Clarke, over at Whitby—he's a K.C.!"

"Lawyer be damned," growled Cobham. "He can't help us."

"But he can!" cried Meghorn excitedly. "These are all very old coins, Saxon or Roman! They were found in Hortel's Shaw, and that was under

water until about the year 1200 or later."

"What's that got to do with it?" I demanded.

"Everything! The Crown can not touch these coins! I've got a book at home that tells about it. In 1897 there was a case of the Crown against the British Museum over the Limavary treasure.* It proved not to be treasure-trove, technically, because the land where it was found had once been under the sea—the treasure had actually not been concealed there but had been lost beneath the sea! The precedent will hold true here—see if it doesn't!"

And be damned if the old chap wasn't dead right, as events proved! We got back our sacks of coin, and there was no case against Alan Cobham, and everything was lovely.

Still, I have often wondered at the curious old fellow sticking around the Beacon watching for ghosts when they were in front of his eyes all the time—the ghosts haunting that story whose details we never learned. The story of a woman who had married the wrong man, the woman on whose grave Alan Cobham had put flowers; and of everything that lay behind the savage hatred between these two brothers.

"And yet we can imagine the romantic details," said Murchison, who was an incurable romanticist. "The details of heartbreak, of sly deviltry on Greg's part, of Alan going off to Africa in the army—"

"Spare us," I broke in. "You can't conjure up anything more downright romantic than that of picking up a Viking's loot where the seacoast hasn't run for a thousand years or so! Oh, that you, Gundy? What's up?"

GUNDY came breaking in upon us, excitedly waving a letter.

"My friends, here is really a marvel! Think of it—a royal treasure! What is it you say in English—busted? Yes. The busted nobleman and the ugly barmaid, and our chance at the crown jewels, ours for the mere picking up—'Allo! What?"

"Okay," I sighed resignedly. "I'm a hard-headed guy. Tell us, and I'll pick holes in it fast enough."

But, as it proved, I could not. There were the crown jewels of England, no less, waiting for us—but that is another story.

*Fact.

"The Nobleman and the Ugly Barmaid," another fascinating story in this series, will be a feature of our next issue. With it will appear the second of Joel Reeve's fighter-boy series, the third of Lt. Com. Richard Kelly's "Behind the Enemy Lines," and many other stories of special interest.

A Man with Nine Lives



THE wrath of God seemed to be on the Black Pigeon mine. It was often said, privately, that it was Pit-boss Hap Miller's complete disregard for the laws of God and the lives of men that made the old workings such a hellhole. Some contended, however, that it started over a quarter-century before, when a herd of work-mules were left down below in the darkness until they went as blind as subterranean monsters.

Whatever the cause, Hap Miller was faced with the problem of finding a new shot-firer—for Peter Nordt's form was laying cold and stiff on the wash-house floor. Hap paced back and forth in the dimly lighted building. "Where? Where?" he muttered, his hands grasping out hopelessly in space.

The Black Pigeon was most famous as a killer of shot-firers. Daredevils of the shot-firing trade had come in from all over the coalfields to match

their wits against it. They came, brave skilled men, full of confidence; they knew how a blast should set in a wall of coal; they knew dynamite and powder and gas and afterdamp. One after another they had met their end—until now Hap knew that the most daring would not go below to light the deadly fuses.

Mike McGuire dragged the inert body under a shower and started taking off the few tattered rags which re-

by HORACE
BRYAN



*"We couldn't find Red nowhere," explained Mike McGuire, leader of the party.
"Guess his body is under a fall of rock somewhere."*

mained upon it. "Peter made a game fight for life," he observed. "He tried to escape through the old workings, but the afterdamp finished him off." The extremities of the Black Pigeon's passages had at many places broken into old abandoned workings which had been driven down on each side of it. Some of these old passages ran for miles, from mine to mine.

"Hell, Mike, that aint what's botherin' me," Hap snorted, disgust show-

ing on his face. "What I want to know is where am I gonna find somebody to pick up his light an' keep them blastin'-fires burnin'."

There was silence in the washhouse, as other members of the crew moved to help Mike wash Peter Nordt's body. They had a creed, and that creed held a certain respect for the dead, as well as for the living.

That silence was broken by a shuffle of feet. A huge stranger stepped for-

ward and stood before the pit-boss. "I'll shoot yer shots, Mister," he volunteered.

Hap turned and peered through narrowed eyes at the stranger. "What'd you say?" he demanded, unable to believe his own ears.

"I said I'd shoot yer shots."

"Aint no playhouse, shootin' the Pigeon's shots!"

"I'll shoot 'em awright," the giant returned dryly.

Hap was ruffled by the stranger's quiet, confident attitude, and he was unable to believe that his problem of finding a shot-firer had been solved so readily. He was used to hunting for his shot-firers, and begging and pleading with them, and finally getting them by offering them sums of money which were irresistible to a workingman—"funeral expenses," the miners called it. So this was too much; he just couldn't believe the man was in his right senses. He whirled and pointed to the crumpled form of Peter Nordt. "Yeah, see that guy?" he sneered. "He said he could shoot 'em, too."

The strange giant moved a step forward threateningly. "I'll shoot yer shots, Mister," he returned crisply, "just like I said."

No man had been so forward with Hap Miller in many a run. Men feared Hap, not because of any great physical strength which he possessed, but because it was known to be bad luck to cross him. He ruled Lindy Hall camp, and ruled it firmly, with the destiny of men's lives which he held in his hands. But he merely raised a restraining hand before the giant. "Okay, okay," he pacified. "It suits me fine if you can shoot 'em."

The newcomer quietly relaxed, waiting for the pit-boss to speak.

"What's the name?" Hap asked, with an effort at casualness.

"The name is Red Devine," the man replied.

Hap peered into the coal-scarred face of the stranger. The miners washing the remains of Peter Nordt stopped their work and stared at him.

"Blastin' Red Devine?" the pit-boss inquired, almost incredulously.

"Some calls me that," the giant acknowledged.

Blastin' Red Devine was a half-legendary figure, known all over the coalfields as "the man with nine lives." He was a daredevil shot-firer whose



Stella balanced her hands on her hips. Hap followed her gaze; suddenly his jaw dropped. "God almighty!" he exclaimed.

superhuman deeds occupied a place in folk-tales beside those of Jesse James. He had a grudge against life, so the story went, and was forever trying to blow himself to bits at his trade. Eight times he had been below in major explosions, but each time he had come forth to live again.

"Blastin' Red Devine!" Hap again muttered. He was slowly coming back to his old self, a shrewd bargainer with men in the deadly business of coal-mining. "Red, you're the answer to my prayers," he said, his hard face beaming. "I hope you're the real Blastin' Red Devine! He's the only man alive that can shoot the Pigeon's shots."

"I'll shoot 'em," Red Devine informed him, "but I gotta have my own conditions."

"Shore, Red!" Hap said cheerfully. "Ask what you want—it's yours."

"Well, first, if there's any blowout, yeaint to send no rescue-party after me."

"Hell, Red," the pit-boss argued, "I have a hard enough time gettin' these superstitious miners down in that hole without any skeletons around!"

"Ye can take me out if I croak, but don't let nobody drag me out alive."

"Okay, Red—it's your terms."

"Then, in case I croak sometime, you promise to send this message." He handed Hap a faded paper, the outside blackened by age and the handling of coal-smeared hands. Hap opened the folded paper and read:

Dear Stella:

I've shot my last shot. You said when you left me to let you know when I quit, so you could come back to me. With love—

Red Devine

This woman, Stella, was behind the death-seeking daredevilness of Blastin' Red Devine. The whole story was not known, except that they were lovers, and had parted because he refused to give up his shot-firing, the most dangerous job in the world. But it seemed Red couldn't quit; neither could he think of living without Stella. He became obsessed with what was considered an insanity, blasting his way from mine to mine, wherever there seemed the biggest chance of getting blown to bits. Death, however, refused to make a rendezvous with him. Fate—and his superhuman strength—always dragged him out to life. . . .

Old Black Pigeon mine was not long in showing its wrath at Blastin' Red Devine. The explosion, far back in its bowels, rocked the whole camp. Smoke and fire belched forth from the shaft and settled down over the prairie. Miners hurriedly gathered at the mine top—and formed a rescue-party, but Hap Miller blocked their path.

"You aint goin' down there after Red," he told them. "I promised nobody would drag him out alive."

The day ended and the night slowly wore itself away. The miners milled about the mine entrance, cursing Hap Miller as an inhuman and ungodly reprobate because he would not allow them to enter the mine in an effort to recover a fellow workman, as was their custom.

The first thing the next morning Hap wired to Stella the message which Red had given him. He then turned to the miners. "You can go drag Red out now," he said. "The devil himself couldn't 'a' lived through the hell of that explosion!"

The rescue-party found the whole interior of the mine wrecked. The cars were upset and crushed, the steel track rolled up, the props blown out, and the top caving.

The following morning, when one of the crews came out after turning the work below over to a fresh gang, Stella was at the pit-top. The pit-boss had already taken her aside and explained that there was no hope for Blastin' Red Devine this time. He had tried to get her away from the pit-top—man's eternal fear of woman's ability to make a scene—but she had refused to leave. As the rescue-party made their report, she stood facing them, shoulders straight, chin up.

"**W**E couldn't find Red nowhere," explained Mike McGuire, leader of the party. "Guess his body is under a fall of rock somewhere. The whole place is a wreck."

Stella was quiet for a moment, her eyes taking in the pit-top surrounding, and studying the dead dumps of the old mines far out on either side. Then she turned to Hap. "Will you give me a lift in your car?" she inquired.

"Shore, Miss," he said gladly. He figured she was about to lose her composure and wanted to get away somewhere by herself. He fluttered about, tried to assist her into the car, and they whirled away from the mine.

As they neared Lindy Hall camp, he turned to her. "Where to, Miss?"

"Do you know where Red did his drinkin'?"

"Shore, Miss—Clem's bootleg joint, over across camp. Got good drinks there, but it aint a place where a woman can have peace and quiet."

"I aint lookin' for peace an' quiet," she informed him. "I'm lookin' for Blastin' Red Devine."

He cast an anxious glance at her out of the corner of an eye, and finally decided that she was talking a little out of her head. He patted her arm sympathetically. Maybe her talk wasn't so crazy, though, he finally decided. He had heard of people who got consolation out of visiting the hangouts of departed loved ones. "Sort of spirit stuff," he mused. He had never been able to commune with the spirits—had never tried it, for that matter, and what was more, he was putting such things off as long as possible, for he was pretty sure of getting in with the wrong crowd. But he figured it would only be natural for the spirit to return to the place where the body had most often been. . . .

Hap brought the car to a stop in front of Clem's joint. Stella was out and running in before the wheels stopped turning. He was right beside her, ready to give a gentleman's strong hand for support, if needed. She took one long look down the room as she stepped inside; then she squared her shoulders and balanced her hands on her hips. Hap stopped at her side. Suddenly his jaw dropped.

"God almighty!" he exclaimed.

Standing at the bar before them, with miners crowded about him, was none other than Blastin' Red Devine. He was already half drunk. His face was parched and cracked, and his black work-suit was torn to shreds. His lamp-cap was cocked far back on the side of his head, and his carbide light was still blazing brightly. His red mop of hair, where it hung from under his cap, was caked with blood.

The miners were in the midst of a toast. "Hurrah for Blastin' Red Devine!" they shouted. "He conquered the wrath of the ol' Black Pigeon!"

Stella slammed the door behind her.

All eyes turned in her direction, and the room was suddenly quiet.

"Red," she said sharply and with contempt, "you're shore lookin' sweet!"

Red gazed at her for a long moment. Surprise lighted his eyes. He slowly set his glass of moonshine down and limped halfway to her.

"Well, Stella, I'm glad to see ye!" he chuckled. "But tell me, what ye doin' 'round these workin's?"

"I heard you'd quit shootin' shots," she replied.

Red looked at her a moment, puzzled, then his gaze shifted to Hap Miller. "You big lug!" he shouted. "I told ye not to send that wire till I croaked!"

Hap was still staring, unable to decide, before he was addressed, whether what he saw was a living man or a spirit from another world.

"I'll swear, Red," he began pleadingly, "we thought you was a goner. How'd you get out o' that hole, anyway?"

"Come out an ol' hole four miles down the prairie," Red explained. "Ye shore have a drouth of convenience 'round here—four miles I had to crawl before I found a hole that'd gimme a peek at God's sunshine."

"Jee-rusalem!" The pit-boss shook his head unbelievably. "Clem," he shouted, "bring me a bracer!" He upped the glass and downed the corn in one long gulp.

"Tell me, Miss," he queried, looking at Stella, "where'd you get your hunch he'd be here?"

"Ho, I know Blastin' Red Devine pretty well," she said. "He's been tryin' to frighten me into marryin' a crazy shot-firer for years—by gettin' himself in jams! But he always manages to get out alive. Then he goes an' gets dog-drunk."

"Haw, haw, haw," Red bellowed, walking back to his glass and dumping the contents down his throat.

"Clem, bring me another drink," the pit-boss pleaded. "Gad—if I hadn't seen it with my own eyes, I wouldn't believe it!"

Stella walked slowly to Red. She laid her hand on his arm.

"You aint goin' back on yer word, are ye, Red?"

Red studied Stella for a moment, then a smile came to his charred face.

"Well, Stella, if that wire said I was through shootin' shots—then I guess I'm through."

Red's words brought the pit-boss back to his senses.

"Red—Red! You can't quit me now!" he shouted. "Gad, I'd never get another shot-firer!"

"Yer troubles are yer own makin'," Red laughed. "Oughtn't to have sent that wire to Stella."

"But, Red, you're ruinin' me," Hap pleaded. "If you quit, then there aint a man in these parts will stick his head into the Black Pigeon."

"Come on," Stella coaxed. She was clinging to Red's arm, pulling him toward the door. "I gotta get you doctored up an' lookin' human again."

Red's eyes twinkled with mirth as he started along with Stella. "Sorry, Hap," he said, "t' be leavin' ye in a lurch like this—but ye see who's got the upper hand."

The pit-boss flopped into a chair and buried his face in his hands. "Holy Jehosephus, I'm done for," he moaned. He stroked his forehead with his open hand, and smacked his dry lips. "Clem!" he cried. "Might as well bring me that whole damned jug!"

Red and Stella joined in the miners' laughter as they walked out the door together.

Let's Talk About the Weather

THE weather probably crops up in conversation more often than any other subject. Let's find out how you rate in a discussion of the weather. Can you pair the weather phenomena listed at the left with their correct descriptions?

1. Williwaw
2. Sirocco
3. Khamsin
4. Baguio
5. Mistral
6. St. Elmo's Fire
7. Simoom
8. Roaring Forties
9. Willy-willies
10. Kona storms
11. Monsoons
12. Solano
13. Doldrums
14. Chinook

15. Dog Days

- a. A violent cold and dry northerly wind of the Mediterranean provinces in France.
- b. Tropical cyclones on the west coast of Australia.
- c. Polar winds in the Aleutians.

A Quiz by Alan A. Brown

- d. Steady winds that blow out from Asia in the winter, and into Asia in the summer.
- e. Hot, sultry season when the star Sirius rises with the sun.
- f. Hot, dust-laden winds from Libyan deserts, found in Italy.
- g. Hot, dusty, moist wind on the east coast of Spain.
- h. The warm wind of northwestern United States.
- i. Tropical cyclone in the Philippines.
- j. Sand storm in Egypt coming from the Sahara.
- k. A belt of frequent calms near the Equator, where the northeast and southeast trade winds meet.

- l. Brush discharge of electricity from elevated objects, usually observed in stormy weather.
- m. Polar-bound winds in the southern hemisphere.
- n. Strong southwest winds that occur in Honolulu in winter.
- o. Very hot, dry, violent dust-laden wind in Arabia and Syria, generated by heat of the deserts or sandy plains.

Answers

e 5	u 10	e 5
h 14	q 6	i 4
k 13	w 8	f 3
g 12	o 7	j 2
p 11	l 9	c 1



Blades of the

FROM where, in his corner, McSnorrt was bent over the cartridge-case that he was polishing, came the unmistakable melody of "Loch Lomond." Perhaps "melody" is not quite the *mot juste* for McSnorrt's rendering. . . . And then—"Annie Laurie," definitely recognizable. I held my breath; then came "Ye Banks and Braes."

Somehow it was a pathetic thing to hear these Scottish airs in a Legion barrack-room in Southern Morocco—to hear them whistled by this exile so far from home, this Scot who never again would see bank or brae, loch or glen, misty moor or purple heather.

For McSnorrt was in love: McSnorrt, of all people—the morose and embittered man, the drunkard, the failure, savagely at odds with himself and the world.

It was in jest that I first used the idiotic phrase, "McSnorrt is in love"—a feeble joke that was my comment on the fact that he was whistling. Actually whistling. A portent! Had I—or anyone else, for that matter—ever before heard such a sound from the lips of McSnorrt? He'd be singing next—God forbid!

Then it came. McSnorrt burst into song, and hurriedly I left the room—not altogether because his voice was harsh and discordant, his music flat.

From that day he began to change; and before long he was a different man.

Had you asked Captain Le Sage, before this episode, for a brief character-sketch of McSnorrt, he would have said:

"The worst soldier and the best fighting-man in my company. The best marcher, the best shot and the best scout I've got—and a dirty drunk-dissolute ruffian, God bless him!"

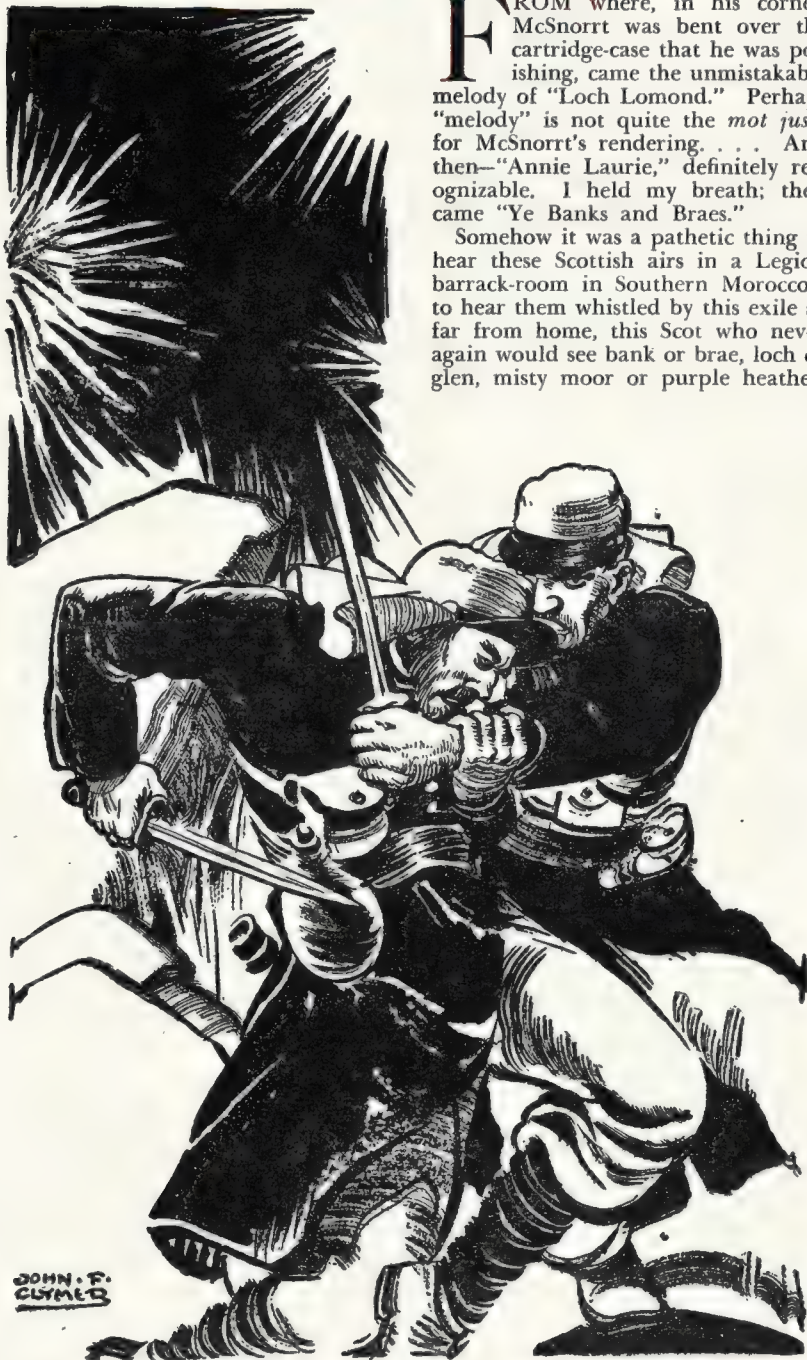
A month later, the drunkard was a teetotaler, the deliberately untidy dirty soldier was a model of spick-and-span smartness; the ruffian whose chief sport was trouble-making had become a pattern of deportment.

The canteen, the cells, the *péloton des hommes punis*, knew him no more.

McSnorrt was in love—for the first time in his life. . . . In love like a romantic boy, and determined to be worthy of the woman he worshiped. This was how love had "taken" McSnorrt—as it takes all men who have anything of the boy left in them, anything fine, romantic, noble.

Curious words to use in connection with this red ruffian, but how can they be wholly inapplicable to a man who loved as he did, and in love so behaved?

One moonlit night he paid me a tremendous compliment, did me an honor that I appreciated at its great worth, and valued enormously. Scot though he was, he opened his heart to me, and told me all about it. I suppose this was another manifestation and effect of his condition. He must talk about her to someone.



With hard-drawn, sobbing breath, they fought, stabbing as though with knives.

Legion

I was to understand that she was nane o' your common lassies; no fly-by-night besom; she was a good girl and worked honestly for an honest living.

In the daytime she worked at Angier's in the Place Bugeaud, and in the evenings she danced at Gaston's. It was there that McSnorrt had first seen her.

"How did I get acquent with her?" said McSnorrt. "I was sitting there in Angier's wi' a bottle in front of me, and Tant de Soif sitting beside me; and she came from behind a curtain onto the little platform by the piano, and sang a song and danced a little—nice modest dancin', ye ken.

"Then she walked about the room haverin' with the soldiers, taking orders and helping the woman at the bar.

"Man, I liked her fine—her bonny sweet face and lovely great eyes! She walked like thistledown blown across a lawn, and she'd stand by a table like a long-stemmed flower that sometimes nods gently in the breeze, sometimes bends.

"'Twas like that she bent to hear what some damned dog of a spahi said to her, and he seized her round the neck as she stooped, and round the waist with his other arm, and pulled her onto his knee.

"She screamed, for the puir lassie was new to the café business. . . . And, ma mannie, in the same meenit, yon spahi was on his ain knees—both o' them—and then on the floor for the count!"

"Did you hurt him?"

"We-e-e-l, I knocked him off his chair; I kicked him up, I knocked him down; I kicked him again, and when he picked up a stool, I hit him on the heid wi' a bottle—a full one. . . .

"He'll be all right when he comes out of hospital.

"Then she thanked me and I waited about, to see her safe to her home; for yon spahis hang together and are apt to be rough and violent men."

I gathered that this had been the beginning of a wooing that had prospered; that the girl was a Spaniard, that she was quite alone in Maraknez; that not only was she industrious, hard-working, self-supporting and self-respecting, but gloriously beautiful and as pure as a lily too; a compen-



A twice-told tale from
our October 1933 issue

by PERCIVAL
CHRISTOPHER
WREN

She came from behind a curtain and sang a song and danced.

dium of the graces, virtues and accomplishments; that McSnorrt now loved her as no man had ever before loved a woman, and that his love was returned.

Well, well. Perhaps so. . . .

More probably the girl was a Spanish Jewess with a strain of Arab, one who slept all day when not consum-

ing pastry, Turkish delight, sherbet and coffee, was not as young as she once had been, was neither as virtuous nor as beautiful as McSnorrt thought her, was anything but self-supporting—and was, in fact, a perfectly ordinary café-girl, dancing at Angier's and dancing also down the terrible road that begins at Marseilles and, by way of

Algiers, Oran, Sidi-bel-Abbès, Casa Blanca, Marrakesh, Fez and Meknes, ends in some last dreadful outpost of "civilization."

Earnestly I hoped that I was wrong and that this strange drama might not end in tragedy.

Meanwhile it was comedy, delightful and intriguing, if a little pathetic, and McSnorrt, treading the narrow path of virtue, climbed from height to height, went on from strength to strength. Positively there was some talk of his being made a corporal, for Captain Le Sage believed in the theory that the worst poachers made the best gamekeepers, and the toughest law-breakers the best guardians of the law, when reformed. . . .

Then, one evening, as I was strolling through a narrow and winding alley in the old quarter of Maraknez, a Légionnaire lurched out, just in front of me, from a gloomy passage, the doorless doorway of a sort of tunnel, at the end of which was a flight of steps leading upward.

The man staggered and swayed, looked to the left and right, saw me, and turned as though to run—if run he could.

It was McSnorrt.

I called to him, and recognizing my voice he stopped, turned again, stumbled, and leaned for support against the wall.

He looked as I have seen men look after a desperate hand-to-hand fight. He looked, indeed, as though he had seen, not a ghost, but something a thousand times more terrible and terrifying.

His face, white to the lips, looked pinched and shrunken; his eyes, starting from his head, still seemed to behold some utter horror. He quivered and shook like a man in the first stages of fever; and with trembling palsied hand, plucked at his mouth.

I had seen McSnorrt in all stages of drunkenness, berserk rage, and fighting madness, but never like this—as though dying on his feet.

"What is it, Mac? What's up?" I said, taking him by the arm.

"God, man!" he whispered. "Help me!"

"What's happened? What's wrong?"

"Help me," he whispered. "Help me to get away from here. . . . For the love of God, get me a drink. Man, I—"

And McSnorrt slid heavily to the ground. He had fainted. . . .

That night the civil police visited the barracks where the company was quartered.

A woman had been murdered in the Rue Ramonones, and a man had seen a Légionnaire, obviously drunk, come from her room, stagger down the stairs and out into the street. There he had been met by another Légionnaire, evidently an accomplice,

who had helped him away. Doubtless robbery had been the motive for the crime, the man priming himself with drink.

An identification-parade was ordered, and the informer, a greasy little rat of a half-caste, identified a big tall red-haired German who had been on guard and on sentry-go the whole evening, and could only have committed the murder if endowed with the unusual faculty of being in two places at once.

We heard no more of the matter, and the public heard nothing at all.

TALK, round the campfire, hundreds of miles from Maraknez.

Hungry, weary men, rested and fed, and each with a reward—more valuable than a *fougeron*—of a liter of wine; McSnorrt, who had filled up in the *bistro*, before receiving the gratuitous liter, was drunk, articulate and reminiscent.

"Huh! That was the most terrible thing that ever happened to you, was it?" he jeered, as Tant de Soif finished telling us of a ghastly deed that he had witnessed at Nak-Nam in the Tonkin campaign.

"Yes. And you, my friend? Doubtless your experiences have been—"

"Experiences, eh?" sneered McSnorrt. "One at a time! And how about this story? I loved a woman once—"

"Once?" laughed Klingen.

"Aye, once. Loved her as— But why talk of such things to you? Loved her as all of you love your lives; and far better than I love mine. And we had our little hidden place apart, our nest.

"It was a lovely, lovely idyl. . . . Perfect. Why, I was *happy*! I, McSnorrt, the damned disgrace of a known respectit family, a great clan and the finest country in the warrld. . . .

"I forgot all that I had been and remembered only what I was, the beloved of the sweetest woman on this earth—this earth, the better for her presence.

"I forgot all that I had done, and remembered only what I was doing, loving her, worshiping her, counting the hours till I should see her again. . . .

"And when I could not see her, she wrote me nice little love-letters—from which I kissed the very words away time and again.

"I tell ye, I was happy—happier than I'd ever been in my life; happy for the first time in my life.

"And one day I got a blow—a blow upon the heart. . . . I asked her to marry me. Aye, I dared do even that, so uplifted was I! I maun ha' been fey.

"I stepped into the room. . . . She was lying on the bed—dead—strangled."

"An' she told me she couldna. Fine she would ha' loved to, she said, but—she had a husband. . . . Aye, the nightmare in our dream, the poison in our cup, the ogre in our idyl! A shadowy husband, some damned dog of a rascal rogue whom she but rarely saw, and



who but came for what he could get, including her money.

"Aye, 'twas a blow. But I soon recovered. . . . For, after all, what mattered—what could matter—while I loved her and she loved me, and the same fine warld held us both."

McSnorrt paused, drank long, and gazed into the dying embers of the fire. . . .

"A blow, did I say? Then think o' this.

"One day I had a little note, from her, a little loving note, saying:

"Come on Sunday evening, my loved one. Come at six. I shall be there; or very soon after. If I have not returned, the key will be—where you know."

"How did I get through the hours that divided me from Sunday and from her? I worked, I whistled, I sang, I looked at clocks and said: 'Another hour has gone!' And although each minute was like an hour, each hour was like a day, I was the 'Happy Warrior.'

"D'ye hear me? Can ye believe me? I, McSnorrt, damned drunken, dirty deevil, was happy—and clean, mind, soul and body!

"And on the Sunday night I went—went once again to the old Moorish house, and climbed the stair that led to her room. The door was fastened, and I knocked our knock upon it.

"No answer.

"Aha! I was first, was I? . . . I'd get me in and hide, and spring out like a roaring lion when she came.

"Reaching up, I felt into the crack between two stones hidden by the ledge above the door. The key was there, and she was out—and at any moment I'd hear her light footsteps as she came up the winding worn stone stair.

"I unlocked the door, stepped into the room, and closed it slowly behind me.

"She was not out. . . . Turning about, I saw her. She was lying on the bed—dead—strangled."

"With a silk stocking," said a harsh grating voice from the other side of the fire.

McSnorrt swallowed.

"Aye," said he, still staring into the embers, "with a silk stocking. Her hands were tied behind her back."

"With the other stocking!" grated the same harsh voice.

"Aye," said McSnorrt, breaking the tense silence. "And between her little lips outstretched to me, was a piece of her note-paper—a letter."

"Mauve note-paper. The writing was in violet ink," said the other man.

"Aye," murmured McSnorrt.

"And the words were," continued the other's rasping voice, hard and cruel:

"'Welcome, beloved. You will stay with me—again—tonight.'"

"Aye," agreed McSnorrt.

"Estella Margarita," said the voice.

"Aye, Estella Margarita," murmured McSnorrt—and suddenly awoke from his reverie to reality, to awareness.

"What?" he whispered. "What did ye say?" And he sprang to his feet.

The other man rose, as quickly. It was Spanish Maine.

Each put his hand upon the hilt of his bayonet.

No one else moved.

"You were her husband?" whispered McSnorrt, incredulous. And—

"You were her lover—her other lover?" said Spanish Maine.

IN one motion McSnorrt drew his bayonet, and with the roar of a wounded lion, he leaped across the fire.

Spanish Maine's bayonet flashed from its sheath; and with the long lean blades, they fought like wild beasts, no man interfering. Here was something terrible, something beyond the ordinary. It was their own private battle, certainly the business of no other man.

At first they crossed blades like swordsmen fighting with rapiers; they thrust and parried, they feinted and lunged; quick as lightning was thrust, parry and riposte. . . .

And then like clumsier swordsmen with sabers, hacking, slashing and hewing, blade clashing heavily on blade, with every now and then a swift, sudden giving of the point as the opponent's blade was raised to strike. . . .

And then, with hard-drawn, sobbing breath, they closed and fought as though with knives, stabbing, stabbing, left hands holding right wrists, as they struggled and swayed like wrestlers.

And at length, clasped to each other, breast to breast, McSnorrt wrenched free his hand and drove his bayonet deep into the breast of Spanish Maine even as that sinewy fighter, left arm about McSnorrt's neck, reached over his enemy's shoulder and stabbed him deep between the shoulder-blades. Swaying, tottering, disarmed—for each had sheathed his weapon in the body of his foe—still clasped breast to breast, they lurched, staggered, fell, and finally lay still. . . .

By the irony of Fate—or of the Butcher (Monsieur le Médecin-Major commanding the military hospital at the base camp) McSnorrt and Spanish Maine lay side by side, slowly returning to life, gradually returning to life, gradually regaining strength and the power of speech.

Usually when the one awoke from sleep, coma and unconsciousness, it would be to find the face of the other turned toward him regarding him with baleful glare.



"And so you were the husband," whispered McNorr, one day, "You were Estella Margarita's husband!" And he licked dry lips.

"I was not her husband," painfully breathed Spanish Maine.

"Her lover? You killed her?"

"Her lover. But I did not kill her," answered Spanish Maine.

Silence.

Beads of perspiration broke out upon his pallid forehead.

"I found her—as you found her."

"At what time?" whispered McNorr.

"At five o'clock that Sunday evening. Did you also have a letter begging you to go, and not to fail her?"

"I did. . . . For six o'clock," breathed McNorr.

"And I," said Spanish Maine. "At five, I found her. Kill her? . . . I would sooner have eaten my own right hand. Kill her? I would have died for her."

"But the letter I got was in her own handwriting," murmured McNorr in bewilderment.

"And so was mine. Beyond the shadow of a doubt."

Feebly McNorr raised an emaciated hand and drew it across his eyes.

"Suicide?" he whispered.

"What, with her hands bound behind her back?" answered Spanish Maine. "Did she strangle herself without hands, or having strangled herself, did she then tie them behind her?"

"The husband—" muttered McNorr. "The husband. . . . He forced her to write the letters—"

"The jealous husband," agreed Spanish Maine, and bared his teeth.

"And you were her lover! Hell's curse on you!" he added, glaring at McNorr.

"Nae, nae," answered McNorr weakly. "Dinna say that, man. See, we both loved Estella Margarita. . . . Did ye love her? Love her, I mean?" he asked earnestly, wistfully.

"I loved her," answered Spanish Maine. "We talked and sang in Spanish. We talked of Spain. She was all Spain to me."

"Man, she was all the warld to me," said McNorr. "Let's forgive each other—for the time. Let's thole each other—for a while. Let's be as friends—for a space. . . . Until we get him. . . . Until we get him. . . . And then, man, ye can kill me, if I dinna kill ye first."

Moving his head slowly and painfully, McNorr turned his face heavenward.

"Almighty God," he whispered, "I'm not fit to pray to Ye, and I'll not ask Ye for Your help. . . . But, God of ma fathers, I'll beg Ye, don't help yon other man, Estella Margarita's husband."

"Amen!" quoth Spanish Maine.

A Snow Job for the Kid

THIS is the story as the Briefing Officer told it over a bottle of Black Death one night, in the cluttered tent he had shared with the Kid. I know it is true in fact, and I think it must be true in spirit, for he knew the Kid better than anybody else. He had lived with him, and he saw and heard all that happened that morning before the flight took off. And what he didn't see—the last part—he got from the men who were there.

"The Kid was the last to get the word," he said. "The dawn patrol had pancaked about oh-eight-forty and the rest of the flight had come in. But he had stayed at the plane a few minutes, talking to the mech about some little something that had gone screwy with the hydraulics. This was like the Kid—he was careless and don't-give-a-damn in his talk, but he never left an airplane that wasn't working like a watch, no matter how small a thing was wrong. Not that he was nervous, or afraid of the plane, or at all the conservative type of pilot, in the air. He wasn't afraid of anything—weather, or distance, or flying over the sea, or what the enemy might do to him, from the ground or in the air."

"'I'm a lazy man,' he used to say, when somebody would kid him about keeping the mechs humping, tightening this little gizmo or that, and testing things. 'They build airplanes to fly themselves, and they'll do it, too, if they are working right. I just go along to shoot the guns.'"

"So the Kid came into the Marine ready-room about twenty minutes late, and the rest of the flight was standing around waiting to see how he would take it when the Skipper gave him the word. I remember how he looked. He came in walking wide-legged, with his seat-pack bumping him back of the knees. He was a little guy, and with the chute hanging on him he looked like a bantam rooster with a brick hanging under its tail.

"He leaned on the rail by my desk to make his report, pulling off his gloves and his helmet. His hair was all damp and tousled from sweat, and

under the straps of his harness his green flight suit was black with sweat.

"'A washout,' he said. 'Airborne oh-five-hundred. On station oh-five-twenty. On deck at oh-eight-forty-two. No contacts. Stooed around at ten thousand, twenty miles west of Lobo, but if the little so-and-sos were up there they wouldn't come down.' The Kid always referred to the Japs like that. Not that he was tough or bloodthirsty; I think it was just a little touch of swagger he put on, because he was younger than most of the other Marine pilots, and looked even younger than he was.

"He did a lot of little things to dramatize himself: Always flew with gloves, though most of the other pilots didn't bother. Sharpened his sheath-knife, and kept it shiny, though the other guys would open cans with theirs. Wore a big old .45 hog-leg that his dad had sent him, instead of the little .38 they issue. I remember the day he got it. He cut a new grip for it out of plexiglas and put his girl's picture under one side, and his dad's picture under the other. I never heard him mention his mother; I think she was dead. Anyway, he checked in just like he always did, and waddled on back to the parachute-rack to get out of his gear—and that's when the Skipper told him.

"He made it sound very offhand. 'By the way, Kid,' he said, 'Group Personnel called up while you were flying, and said your orders were in. You are detached as of now, and can go home by first available air transport. That means you ought to get out of here tomorrow. So get all your gear together ready to turn in.'

EVERYBODY was watching the little guy. I don't know what they expected him to do: Faint, maybe. Or dance on the tables. Or grab the Skipper and kiss him.

"For I'll have to explain one thing about him: He was a great flyer; he loved to fly, and he loved air combat. But he wanted to get back home worse than anybody I ever saw. Ever since the scuttlebutt got around that relief

A true-to-war drama
of the Pacific

by HAROLD H.
MARTIN

1st Lt., U.S.M.C.

for the pilots was on the way, he had talked about it. Everybody had, for that matter. The squadron was tired. They had been flying two months solid and they had begun to lose men fast. Not so many to enemy action, though that was bad enough, but from pure fatigue—operational crashes. But the Kid was the one who seemed most eager to get home. Every time he'd see a Commando coming in from down south, he'd shout, 'There they come, boys! There's our relief!' Every time he saw one taking off, he'd say something about wishing he was on it.

"He made a sort of fable out of it. The gang used to gather in our tent at night to shoot the breeze, and somebody would say 'Kid, let's go home,' and then he'd start. He'd lie back on his sack and shut his eyes and describe it all. First the General himself would bring over our orders, all tied up with ribbon like a college diploma, on a red silk pillow with gold tassels. Then the Colonel would ride us over to the transport, in a station-wagon with white sidewall tires. We'd get aboard—and the pilot would be Ty Power, so we could snow our girls about a movie star flying us home.

"Then he'd fly the trip home, leg by leg: He'd describe the weather, and the clouds, and the look of the sea; and drinking coffee with the Red Cross girls at Guam when we stopped for gas; then the hop to the Marshalls—and the landing at Pearl, in the evening, with a blue mist over the harbor.

"It will be on a Sunday evening," he would say. "There will be a big bright moon, and they will be dancing on the terrace, under that big tree, at the club at Ewa. And they will be three deep at the bar, but they will make room for the Kid, with his ribbons on. We'll all drink two tall ones apiece, very slowly. Then we will begin to snow them. We will give them the word. We will shoot down all the Japs all over again, making with the hands to show them how we did it.

"Then we'll borrow a jeep—if we can find one unlocked—and head for Honolulu. We'll go to P. Y. Chong's and eat a steak a foot thick. Then



"I don't know what they expected the Kid to do—faint, maybe."

we'll go back to transient quarters and break out a bottle and sing; we'll sing all night until it's time to take off in the morning.' After that he'd fly us on to Dago and put us up at the U. S. Grant, or maybe the Coronado. Or sometimes he'd fly us to Frisco, and we'd pitch a big party at the Top o' the Mark. 'We'll get all dressed up in our greens with our ribbons on,' he'd

say, pretending to shine his fingernails on his shirt. 'And we'll snow everybody—the doggies and the swabbies and the guys who haven't been out yet. And when we break up and go home, the newspapers will put our picture in the paper, with a long piece about how many Japs we shot down.'

"The guys used to love to sit around listening to the Kid talk like this. For

I don't care how modest a man is, he can't help thinking about getting home with a lot of Japs to his credit and a lot of ribbons on his chest to impress everybody with. And though they'd be embarrassed to talk like that themselves, they liked to hear the Kid putting their thoughts into words."

THE officer poured another shot of Black Death—a short one, to make the bottle last. "So you see," he said, "knowing how eager to get home the Kid was, we thought he'd do something fantastic, something we could talk about, and laugh about, like climbing right up the walls. But he didn't.

"When the Skipper had finished talking he just stood there, his chubby face a blank. He reached up slowly and unsnapped the hook that held the



"He was just horsing around, like always when he was going to a fight."

'chute-strap across his chest, and he pulled his Mae West over his head, with the rescue mirror and the dye marker dangling from it. He dropped them very deliberately, to the floor. He shrugged out of his 'chute and let it fall. And he dropped his helmet and goggles and his headphone cord. He picked up his plotting-board, which he had laid on the table, and placed it carefully on top of the pile. Then he shoved the whole stack of gear under the table with his foot, like a bunch of old junk he had no more use for. Then he sat down on the bench by the table and you could read in his face what was going on in his mind.

"You could see the tight spring unwinding inside, the hard bright spurious shell of recklessness breaking and cracking and falling away. You knew his mind was flashing back over the dangerous road he had come: Flight school, where four men he knew had been killed. Advanced training, that cost three more. Squadron duty, Stateside, and the long navigational hops, the weather-flying, the gunnery runs that men sometimes didn't pull out of, the crash-landings and the burnings. A race with a thousand obstacles. And when one was safely over, always another, higher and more dangerous, just ahead. And finally the toughest obstacle of them all, the combat tour. And the men going out who didn't come back—the man on the wing, calling: 'Help! Somebody help me!' But what can you do to help a man, going down with a wing shot off and his cockpit on fire? And the casual talk, to veil the terror: 'Who was that got creamed today? Old Smitty? Too bad! His wife just had a baby. Well, let's check his gear and see if he didn't have a couple of quarts stowed away.' And now the end of all that for him. And the dawning knowledge that death had missed its last big chance at him—that he was through, and going home.

"Even the gang, who don't see much but surface things, seemed to comprehend. They just let him sit there alone, until he finally got up, and laughed a big laugh, and said, 'Well, whaddayuh know?' Then they crowded around and whacked him on the back, congratulating him—and meaning what they were saying, too, for they knew with the Kid getting his relief, theirs would be along soon. So they all left, laughing and talking about when it would be.

"But he didn't go. He came back to my desk and started to say something, then stopped, looking at the flight-board where I'd posted the afternoon mission. He didn't even read it, just glanced at it, at first, and waved his hand and said: 'That's for the birds, my fran!' Then he stopped and read the top line, slowly: 'Today's tar-



get—airfields at Kanoya.' He frowned. 'Say, Jeff,' he said, 'where's Kanoya? One of those little islands up north of here?' 'Nope,' I said, and pulled out a target map to show him. 'Right here. On Kyushu, southernmost of the Jap home islands. We're going right in to where they live. It'll be the first time that land-based Corsairs have been over Japan—if we can make it. It's a test. To see if we can carry enough gas and ammo to go up there and have a fight and come back here. If it works—'

"He broke in hurriedly: 'How important is it? I mean, compared to the B-29's hitting Tokyo and Yokohama and those places; how does it stack up with what they do?'

"SOMEHOW I had the feeling he wanted me to say it didn't amount to much, and if I had known what was on his mind, I guess I would have lied a little. But I didn't. I told him: 'I guess it's just about as important, in a way, as what the Army boys are doing. They are knocking off the airplanes that will be hitting us six months from now, by tearing up the factories. But the planes that are sinking our ships and coming down here to bomb us every night are the ones that are flying now—lots of them from Kanoya. And they are the ones we are going after.'

"He grabbed me by the arm. 'Look, Jeff,' he said, 'I'm going on that strike! Where's the Skipper?'

"I broke in on him. 'Don't be a dope,' I said. 'You're through. Look here.' I picked up the file that shows what each pilot has done on his tour. 'You've got seven planes to your credit and God knows how many bombing missions. You've got the Navy Cross and the D.F.C., and enough Air Medals to make you humpbacked. Knock off this eager-beaver stuff and lay off



*Illustrated by
Grattan Condon*

"They went right in on the deck—pouring slugs into everything that moved."

until it's time for you to go home." But he didn't even hear me. He went barreling out the door; I knew he was going to find the Skipper.

"It worried me. The Kid wanting to go didn't make sense. There are some pilots, I know, who, because they are born killers, or because they love to fly or because they hate the Japs, or because they love glory, stay out after their tour is over and are always begging for dangerous missions. But hardly one in a hundred is like that, and the Kid wasn't one of them. I didn't have time to brood over it, though, for I had to brief the strike and I had to get some notes together,

"They came down in about an hour for the briefing. You could tell they had had the word, or a little of it, for some of them were laughing too much, and too loud, and some of them were yawning—those nervous yawns you always see before the squadron is going out on an extra-dangerous mission. I made it short and snappy and didn't give them any pep-talk or flag-waving. They knew what it meant to hit Japan. So after I'd given them time-of-takeoff and ammo-loading and weather-overtarget and what I knew about the flak at the two fields—Kanoia and its satellite, Kanoia East—I sat down and the Skipper took over. He got up, pulling at his big red mustache.

"But he got going pretty well—giving them altitude to fly going up, and throttle-settings to save gas, and so on, and as he got into the mechanics of the flight the nervousness went out of them, as it always did when they got into the dry statistics. He had a fairly simple plan worked out for the run over the targets: Two divisions were to fly high cover over Nagoya at eighteen thousand, with three divisions going down low to knock off anything that came up to fight. When they'd knocked off airborne opposition, they were to go in, just off the deck and all out, to strafe. Then they were to pull up high, and the top cover was to come down to beat up Nagoya East. Then they were to barrel out of there by a certain route, to avoid the biggest concentration of AA, and join up to come on home.

"WHEN I sat down after I had said my piece, I saw the Kid, back in the back row, scribbling on his knee pad, and I knew then he had sold the Skipper a bill of goods and was going along. But there was something in his face I couldn't quite understand—strain, or uncertainty, or something. So when the gang filed out to the line to find their planes I went over to him where he was scrabbling his gear out from under the table, and asked him what was the scoop.

"He shrugged.

"The Skipper blew his top at first," he said. "He gave me the same song and dance you did. But I kept talking and he finally said I could have the stand-by. If somebody can't take off, or has to come back, I get to go."

"He grinned and rubbed the little bead doll he wore on his helmet. His girl had sent it to him as a good-luck charm. 'I've got Jo-Jo working for me,' he said. 'He's going to hex somebody's engine.' Then he started to go, and I thought again how much he looked like a little banty rooster. But he stopped in the door and turned around, looking sort of funny, and said: 'Do me a favor, will you, Jeff? If by chance I get off—and don't get back—and you have to write the letter

for the Skipper' (he patted the pistol-butt covering the pictures of his dad and his girl) 'give 'em a good snow job for me, won't you? They won't know where Kanoia is, either. So be sure and tell 'em it's in Japan—just like Tokyo.'

"I should have got it then, but somehow I didn't. In a minute or so I went on out to the line to watch the takeoff. The Corsairs were already out of their revetments, coming down the taxi-way two by two, their engines snorting, deep and hollow, and the coral dust whirling back under their tails like smoke. The Kid was in the revetment at the head of the runway, already in the cockpit, kidding with his mech in pantomime. He had the engine turning over easy, and he'd lean forward with his hand cupped to his ear, listening. Then he'd make a circle with his thumb and forefinger and twist his mouth around—the old gesture that meant *Okay*.

"He saw me watching him, and grinned and waved at me. Then he touched his fingertips under his chin and closed his eyes and wagged his head from side to side as if he were praying. I put my finger to my temple and twirled it, to signify I thought he was nuts, and he laughed and thumbed his nose at me. We kept up this foolish pantomime maybe five minutes, until the first plane of the flight came down. He leaned forward, listening to the sound of her engine, and when she was airborne, he shook his head as if in regret at a chance he had missed.

"They kept on going down, and I saw him rubbing that little doll, and blowing on it as if it was a pair of dice. But they all got off, and as the last one lifted off, he slumped back in his seat and watched her go. He turned his palms up in a gesture of mock despair and I motioned for him to come on down. But he shook his head, and I turned to go back. I had just reached the door of the Quonset, when I heard him gun his engine—and I turned around.

"Swinging into a landing turn at the head of the runway was a Corsair with its engine torching and coughing like a sea-lion, and a plume of black smoke trailing out behind. The Kid didn't even wait to clear with Operations. He skidded his tail around and roared for the takeoff point. He gunned her once, at the head of the strip, holding her with the brakes, shuddering, and I could see him checking his gauges. Then he idled her back and looked over to where I was and raised his clasped hands over his head, like a prizefighter shaking hands at the crowd. Before I had time to wave, he was gone, in a tearing racket and a cloud of dust.

"Standing there in the door, where he had stopped on his way out, I re-

membered that funny little speech of his, and began to see a glimmer of light. But it wasn't until I sat down to censor the mail that everything was clear. There were two letters there the Kid had written the night before, before he knew he was going home. One was to his girl back home, and down toward the end was this line: 'I was inrested' (the Kid never could spell) 'in what you told me Chuck Wilson said in his letter about flying the B-29s. So he is going to bomb Tokyo, is he? Well, that is fine and I hope him luck. But I bet he gives everybody a big snow job when he gets home.' And there was a letter to his dad: 'Jan told me she had a letter from Chuck Wilson. She said he is going to fly a B-29 over Tokyo. I bet Mister Wilson is really beating his gums bragging about Chuck. But don't let it get you down, Pop. Maybe you can brag about this Marine some too.'

"So that was it," I said. "The dumb, proud, jealous little guy!"

THE Briefing Officer shoved his chair back.

"Go on," I said, "Let's have the rest of it."

"What happened afterward I heard from the boys in the flight," he resumed. "They said the Kid joined up about half an hour out, chipper as a squirrel and kidding over the intercom until the Skipper made him knock it off. He was on Tex's wing and Tex said he could see his lips moving, as if he were singing, and when he saw Tex looking at him, he gave the 'thumbs-up' sign and bobbed his shoulders forward—like he was trying to hurry the Corsair along. Just horsing around, like he always did when he thought he was going to a fight. But there wasn't much fight to it. When they got over the target the Skipper sent the Kid's division up as high cover, and there was nothing up there—just one Zeke that stayed far out of range, doing acrobatics, trying to lure somebody out of formation to make a pass.

"So they circled around, but nothing came up to fight and they stayed up there while the divisions down low went in to beat the field up good with their fifties. Then they pulled up to high cover, and the Kid's division went down, over Nagoya East, and gave it a good shellacking. They went in right on the deck—fishtailing to foul up the AA gunners, for the flak was popping like corn in a popper, and pouring slugs into everything that moved on the ground and everything that looked as if it might hide a plane.

"They made four uns and started some fires and hurt some people. Then they pulled up to rendezvous and headed on home, filling the air full of the excited gum-beating you always hear when a strike starts home, no mat-

ter how the Skipper yells about radio discipline. Tex was asking everybody did they see that Jap on a horse, high-tailing down a taxi-way flogging the horse? Somebody asked Tex did he strafe the Jap, and Tex said, hell, no, he was afraid he would hit the horse! Micky McGuire had swung wide of the field a little on the last run, over a railroad station, and there was a little stumpy conductor in a blue suit standing at the gate taking tickets and Micky had turned his fifties loose into the dinky that was pulling the train and the conductor had flung his tickets into the air like confetti and run. And Jim, flattatting down the runway, saw a plane taking off and gave it a squirt—and the pilot jumped out, leaving the plane to run wild down the runway. Lot of stuff like that they always talk about when they are headed home. But finally the Kid broke in:

"If the Leatherneck Ladies Sewing Circle will kindly knock off the chatter for a minute, I would like to report I am flying a very sick chick." The Skipper told him to report his damage, and the Kid, still sounding like he was half joking, said: 'Just a general coming apart at the seams, caused by too much lead in the tail. And in the nose and the wings and other isolated spots. Some joker had me boresighted on that last run.' The Skipper asked him if he thought he could make it on home and the Kid said sure, but he'd have to nurse her along. The Skipper told Tex and Micky to stay on his wing and give him what help they could.

"So they went along that way with the Kid wisecracking about how the old beaten-up crate was behaving—'She's just like a horse that wants to graze. Have to keep pulling her head up all the time,' he said—until they were over Point Lobo, ten minutes from home. Then he popped his flaps to see how she would behave and her nose went down like a rock, and Tex said that for a minute he thought the Kid wasn't going to bring her up straight and level again. Then he dropped his wheels and the same thing happened. So he told the Skipper: 'I can put her down, wheels up and flaps up, I think,' he said. 'But she'll land awful hot. She won't stay up much longer—not long enough for me to wait while the other guys pancake. And if I go in first and she burns on the runway, some of them haven't got gas enough to wait while they clear the strip. I guess I'd better leave her.'

"The Skipper asked him did he want to ditch or jump, and he said he'd rather jump. 'I could use some fresh air,' he said. So the Skipper said 'Good luck!' and the Kid eased her around to the west, toward the open sea beyond the edge of the fleet. He switched his mike to the rescue-



"He flipped her over on her back and the Kid came out head-first. He fell about a thousand feet, tumbling slowly, like a doll falling."

channel and Tex and Micky heard him talking to a crash-boat down below and saw the boat stand out from the fleet, toward the spot the Kid said he'd try to hit. They saw him in the cockpit, calmly getting out of his safety-belt and checking his 'chute straps. When he had open water below him, he switched his mike to their channel and said 'See you guys at chow,' and gave them the 'thumbs-up' sign.

"Then he flipped her over on her back and they saw the canopy break away and the Kid came out head-first, clean. He fell about a thousand feet, tumbling slowly like a doll falling. Then he cracked his 'chute and it blossomed quickly, and the Kid jerked up straight in the harness. They went down to circle him. He was floating straight down, not oscillating, and they circled closer and he waved at them and laughed and rocked back and forth, pumping on the risers like a kid in a swing. He pulled up one leg and off a shoe and held it up between thumb and forefinger and dropped it and took the other one off and dropped it and watched it fall away. He looked up at his canopy and blew a kiss at it, and a lot of horse-play like that. Then he slipped back on his seat-pack and unhooked his leg-straps so he could lift his arms and slide out when he was about to hit. The crash-boat was standing downwind, waiting, and it looked as if it would be as easy a rescue as you'll find in the books.

"But about fifty feet off the deck a gust of wind snatched at his canopy and he swung out like a pendulum. Nearly straight out, and back again. And on the back-swing he hit, on his back, slamming hard into the water in a geyser of spray. Tex went down low to look, and he could see him there, stiff and straight out like a plank floating, tangled in the risers, with the whitecaps washing over his head. The crash-boat came in fast, and had him aboard in no time. They worked on him for hours. But the Kid was dead—the shock when he hit had stunned him, and he had drowned."

"Poor little guy," I said. "Poor dumb, proud, jealous little guy."

"Mainly just dumb, I guess," the Briefing Officer said. "A squadron of the B-29s got in yesterday. One of their ground officers was over here. He was sorry to hear the Kid was gone. They were from the same town, he said. They used to be always getting in fights; used to go with the same girl."

"Well, I'll be damned," I said. "You mean—"

The officer nodded. "The very same guy," he said. "Got hurt in a crash at Saipan and never flew a combat mission. This is as close as he ever got, to Tokyo."

Little Alley and the Duppy

Many a child has invented an imaginary playmate.
But this time the newspapers got hold of the story.

by SCHUYLER SMITH



I WANT to get the record straight before we settle down together in your favorite foxhole. I'm just reporting and editing the following events as they happened. I've never played editor before, so I guess a lot of things will get in that shouldn't.

I went to a reputable psychiatrist after these events occurred and told him I felt like a haunted house whose haunt had left it in the lurch but which still wanted to creak hinges all the time. He was a sympathetic sort of fellow, and urged me to tell all.

After the séance he gave me an affidavit stating that I was sane; not

prone to exaggerate unless excited; unreasonably sober at least ten percent of the time; but that my Peter Pan complex, which he claimed lurks in every man, was somewhat left of center.

I'm sure he was glad to get rid of me and I know he never wants to see me again, for he sent me a whopping bill.

I'll bow out now, more or less, and leave you on your own, or we'll never get going. . . .

Our newspaper is a family affair. The owner is the editor, also my uncle. It's really not a bad little sheet; it even has its own press, and a

small solid circulation, much of which is rural. The rural stuff, that's me; or at least me and my jalopy. After years of bumping, grinding and snorting along country roads I know how a centaur must have objected to his horse's rear end. But it was that or walk—and my greatest gift is not being able to move : muscle unless I have to.

We had our foreign correspondents strategically placed in near-by villages to collect such whiz bang stuff as:

MAPLE FALLS: Sadie Shanks was the brightest star of Mrs. Hammer's lemonade and punch party given for the benefit of the Maple Falls Lum Zum Society of higher culture and finer art. Sadie, in a pretty pink organdy, stole the show with a series of faces she made up all by herself. Sadie is five, and the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Eph Shanks. . . . Hollywood had better look to its laurels.

While this kind of twaddle often kept the circulation up when nothing else would, I was above such things, being the county cover-all and feature man. I could (and still can) turn a hard-cider dance at the Grange into a champagne ball at the Ritz, with nothing on but a wry smile.

WELL, I was out on a routine round-up and it was spring. It was one of those beautiful days that spring is usually noted for the absence of, with everything bursting into new life at once, the green foliage massing all over the place, and that combined smell of rich earth and blossoms, which to me is the most wonderful perfume in the world. On days like that I'm an anti-city boy, right up to the hub caps.

There I was bouncing and jouncing over the old shore-cut to Eel Junction. I knew every bend, twist, rise and dip in that road, and so did the jalopy; often I made the run writing copy, never had to touch the wheel. I knew every farmhouse, farmer, farmer's wife, and all the more piquant farmers' daughters, also most of the children, dogs, cats and cattle.

As we rolled and dipped along the roller-coaster road, I made up my mind to call on some newcomers who had just bought the old Cy Cutler place. I could look 'em over and maybe get a subscription for the sheet at the same time. I was handy that way too.

I turned into the drive and got out of the car near the rear of the house from habit. You could knock on a front door all day long in our country, and die from exposure before anyone answered.



"He sayed if I ever did get the ol' loom a-workin' he'd make it not-work so quick it'd make me dizzy. He sayed he was a Duppy."

Someone was moving around in the big kitchen as I walked over. It was no surprise to find it was the new farmer's wife. When I told her who I was, everything was fine and dandy: she gave me some coffee and made me sample the gingerbread she had just pulled out of the oven.

I knew their name was Alley, but that's all I knew about them. The subscription came off all right; then I angled around for any possible news

items. Mrs. Alley was one of those big, warmhearted, flush-faced country women who take almost anything that comes their way for granted. Two sons were in the service, it seemed, and very much missed on the farm. Two daughters were also absent; one was training to be a nurse, and the other one was teaching school somewhere.

"Then," she said, rather coyly, "there's Little Alley."

It sounded like an afterthought the way she said it, and I guess he must have been—because Little Alley turned out to be seven years old.

I didn't pay much heed to this Little Alley, until she said in a hesitating way:

"We don't know what to make of him any more. I guess me and Pa was really too old."

One of my ears came to attention. What was the matter with Little

Alley, I wanted to know—nosey, yes, but that's the Fourth Estate for you.

Nothing seemed to be the matter with him except he had a friend who was very remarkable indeed, but whom they had never seen. His name was Hup the Duppy.

My other ear came into focus at once and the news-hound nose began to quiver.

"That's a very unusual name, Mrs. Alley," I said. "I know this part of the country pretty well, and if there's a family named Duppy in it, it eludes me."

"Oh, no," she said. "You don't rightly understand. Hup isn't a person. I mean he hasn't a family. I mean, he's just a Duppy."

I gulped the last of the coffee quickly before launching out again.

"Mrs. Alley," I began slowly, "I make a living out of gathering news. Do you think it would be possible to have a little talk with your son? We might like to include his friend in the New Arrivals column, but I want to know more about him first."

It worked like a charm. "Why," she said, "I think Little Alley would love that! You see me and Pa try hard to understand the little fellow when he talks about his playmate, but we aint been able to, yet." She thought Little Alley might be out in the barn-loft—if I wanted to go find him.

I found Little Alley in the barn-loft as advertised, working hard over a small and ancient hand-loom such as I had only seen in a museum. One of the great mysteries of life to me has always been how some people have the children they do. Of course, I still had to meet Mr. Alley, but I was sure I could reproduce him inch by inch. Little Alley, however, was out of a story-book and had no business being even the afterthought of a middle-aged down-to-earth farming couple. He greeted me as though I were in the habit of visiting every day.

"Hi," he said, looking up at me with earnest big blue eyes. "This thing's busted ag'in!"

I ALLOWED as how that was quite a contraption for such a little fellow to be fussing with.

"Oh, no," he answered quickly. "If Hup would only leave it alone—"

There was a big window in the barn-loft where the loom was, and Little Alley stood in front of it, the sun radiating from his golden head like a hazy halo.

"Just what," I asked, as casually as I could, "does Hup do to it?"

"He makes it not work, of course," Little Alley replied as matter-of-fact as you please.

Most of us think we've been around a lot, seen enough and heard too

much—and I'm no exception; but this was a stopper. All my years of experience with leading questions did me no good. The ever-ready quips dried up. In short, for once in my life I was speechless.

Now I like children—it's only when they grow up that I sometimes wonder if the effort was worth it—and I think they like me; so while I haven't any of my own, I happen to know some of the things they're apt to do. One of them is dreaming up little characters. Often these imaginings are more real to them than Mamma and Papa. It wasn't this about Little Alley that stopped me, it was the way he put his idea across—which for me, anyway, was original: of a somebody spending his time making something not-work.

Then there was Little Alley himself. I could no more visualize him behind a plow some day, than myself in that tortuous situation. I didn't know what I had hold of, but I was

sure it was out of the ordinary. So I played it straight.

Little Alley was again absorbed with the loom. "My name's Ed Carver," I said.

He ignored the formal introduction and spoke without looking up. "Last time 'twas the treadle; now it's the warpin'-bar. That Duppy's a pest, but I aint quittin'."

"Everybody calls me Pastepot," I persisted.

"That's a funny name," said the boy, still busy.

"Yes, Little Alley, it's a funny name, but so is yours. Haven't you any other?"

"Nope," he answered gravely; "leastways that's what they always call me."

"O.K., Little Alley it is," said I, getting back into stride. "Now would you mind telling me about this Duppy—what he is, where he comes from, and what he does or doesn't do that annoys you so much."

The boy stood up straight in the slanting sunlight and scratched his head with both hands.

"Well, Mr. Pastepot," he said deliberately, "it began when Pa set up this here now machine. I found her

"You've gone and done it," he cried; "you've ruined me!" "Unc," I proclaimed, "this is no time for recriminations; the time has come for action."



in the rafters an' I wanted 'er set up here. Pa, he said 'twas foolishment, but he done it just the same."

I came out strongly with, "What's that got to do with a Duppy?"

"I'm a-comin' to that part, if you'll hol' yer hosses."

I held my "hosses" and my breath too, for there was something about this seven-year-old which told me to stay on my side of the fence, if I wanted any story at all.

LITTLE ALLEY came around to the end of the loom and sat on the weaver's bench, dangling his feet.

"You kin set, if you're a mind to," he said, indicating an upturned box.

I "set."

"Lots of folks think I'm teched, when I tell 'em about this Duppy—but I aint."

"Little Alley," I countered, and I think I was sincere even then, "I don't think you're teched and I want to know all about him—or is it an it?"

"'Taint no it, it's a him, an' he's littler than me. He's all dressed up like a costume; we got a pitcher like him in the house."

"When did you see him first? And what did he say to you?"

In answer to this, Little Alley went on at length—and I give you herewith the sum and substance of his discourse.

The lad had no sooner started fussing around with the old loom, he told me, than this character appeared. Little Alley hadn't the slightest no-

tion where he'd come from. He just looked up and there Hup was, sitting cross-legged on the weaver's bench. Little Alley was most impressed by the fact that the stranger was "littler" than him, he repeated two or three times, and that in addition he had a profuse white beard, lots of wrinkles and a costume, along with his littleness.

I asked him, what kind of a costume, and he described something like the outfits the Pilgrim Fathers wore. You've seen those pictures of them going to church, armed to the teeth, in case the "hostile savages" should desecrate the Sabbath by taking potshots at them. I asked Little Alley if the character carried a gun or anything like that. Oh, yes, indeedy, he had his "shootin'-gun," all right, only he called it something that ended in "buss." The boy couldn't rightly "recommember" the first part.

Could it have been a blunderbuss, I asked him. "Sure was—just!" he cried, and how did I know? I told him a blunderbuss was a kind of shootin'-gun that folks used in olden times.

What did he do then, I wanted to know. "Did he just sit there and watch you, or did he talk?"

"He talked kind o' funny, Mr. Pastepot. He sat there an' tol' me I was a-wastin' my time. He said if I ever did get the ol' loom a-workin' he'd make it not-work so quick it'd make me dizzy. He said he was a Duppy, an' his name was Hup. Duppies was the not-work spirit of the ol'

machines an' when I started workin' the ol' loom it was his bounden duty to work ag'in' me—but I was so young I'd never git a-goin', anyhow! He said he was gonna take a vacation and have him some fun with all the newfangled machines around in the farmhouses here. He bet me he could have 'em all stopped in nothin' flat. I didn't rightly ketch his meanin' good, right off, but he tol' me everythin' whut works has a not-work spirit in it, an' after wrasslin' with this thing, I think he's got that right-side-up!"

Little Alley paused for breath and I paused for thought. The lad accepted the apparition of Hup the Duppy with so much assurance that, as I listened to him, I almost believed in the character myself. The not-work business, whether Little Alley's invention or no, was worthy of a wider audience. Then and there I decided to take on a new job—as publicity agent for a Duppy.

I thanked Little Alley for his recitation and asked would he mind if I put a few words in the paper about the Duppy. No, he personally would be tickled, but the Duppy mightn't like it.

"He's kinda ornery," he said.

"Suppose we don't tell him," I countered.

"He'll find out," said the lad.

"He's a smart un."

I left the boy with that wonderful warm feeling of complete understanding we sometimes find in the unlikeliest nooks and crannies. I suppose some day I'll grow up, but right now that kind of thing coming my way every so often, makes life reasonable.

MY uncle was waiting for me when I got back to the paper. He was in a stew, as usual. Uncle had a habit of shouting even the simplest remarks; when he got excited, his bellowing had sometimes been mistaken for the fire-alarm, if the office windows happened to be open. With all his caper-cutting he wasn't anywhere near as cussed as he sounded. He also had a peculiar habit of firing me formally once a week, just before he put the paper to bed.

"You addleheaded scatterbrain," he shouted in warm greeting, "where the hell have you been? I'll be damned if I'll hold up my paper for you drivell! You've had a whole damn' week and I've got nothing out of you yet but a question-mark." Then he grew sadly ironic. "I suppose you were created to keep me in good itching form, like an active flea on a dog. I can't think of any other reason!" Then he roared: "Get me copy—and don't sit down to it, or you'll fall asleep! And in case I forget to tell you, you're fired!"





All this was routine. I just stood with my hat on the back of my head, doing the nail-polishing act until the word "fired" brought up my cue.

"Unc," I replied, "did you ever think that perhaps the dog was created so the cute little flea would have something nice and soft to play around on?"

My uncle rose half out of his chair—but just before he swallowed his Adam's-apple, I performed a strategic withdrawal.

With malice aforethought, my week's copy was considerably short—but as they were about to descend to boilerplate, I made mention of an item that would just do it. Time was short, however, and so was my uncle's

temper. I told him not to fret, I could dictate it to Louis the Lino, our long-suffering linotypist. Even if I didn't run the paper I could control some of the cogs, and Louis was one of these. We both jiggered to the same tune.

Unc muttered: "Always short, always late, bad practice, shouldn't be done, but go ahead anyway."

I dictated the following little gem:

ALARMING NEWS FROM EEL JUNCTION

In an interview with Little Alley, the son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Allen Alley, who recently bought the Cy Cutler farm, Master Alley revealed to a reporter for this paper that a Duppy is at large in the countryside.

Little Alley has seen and talked with said Duppy, and advises he made wild statements concerning the terrorization of the whole community. The Duppy could not be reached for comment.

This newspaper warns everyone to be on the lookout for this fugitive from an old loom. He is dangerous and cunning and may attack any machine at any time and put it out of commission.

His description is as follows: Two feet tall, and sports a heavy white beard. Wears a high conical black hat with large wild-turkey feather stuck in hatband, long black jacket with wide white collar around neck, black knee-breeches and dark blue woolen stockings, black square-toed shoes with silver buckles. He is armed with a murderous blunderbuss, and will fire at the least provocation. He answers to the name of "Hup." Local police have been notified.

Louis stopped and turned around to take a good long look at me. "You daffy-down-dilly!" he said. "Wild-turkey feather, huh? Boy, that aint reporting—that's litrachure!"

"Back to your keyboard, slave," I ordered. "My manifest destiny lies in getting this in the paper. A good publicity agent stops at nothing."

Louis shrugged and turned back to his machine. I continued:

For the information of those few who are lucky enough never to have encountered a Duppy, this paper gives a brief description of their nefarious activities.

Duppies are the evil genius, or the not-work spirit, of the old hand machines. Most of the tribe passed away with the disappearance of such things and the coming of the machine age. Even to this day, however, a Duppy may sometime get released through the circumstances of a hand machine being put into operation again.

In the case at Eel Junction, it was an ancient hand-loom. Mr. Alley set this up for his son, who has been endeavoring to put it into operation. This apparently accomplished the release.

According to old-timers around these parts, the Duppy's depredations are apt to be worse because of his long confinement. They were gravely concerned about the incident and are already organizing a group of minute-men to cope with the situation.

This paper would appreciate any further information concerning the activities of the marauder, so that it may keep the public informed and advise the necessary steps to be taken to stamp out this evil before it does irreparable damage.

"Louis," I said when I was through, "if you can get that into the form somehow, without anybody trying to galley it or read it—well, I've got a gallon of Cob County corn that says you can."

It didn't take more than the usual still small voice to urge me away from the vicinity of the paper and of my uncle's bifocals for a while. With good common sense the voice said: "Pastepot, that came very close to being sharp practice, and on your poor old uncle too. Perhaps a few days off is just what you need to get hold of yourself." I accepted the voice's suggestion with pleasure; in fact, I didn't turn up until the middle of the following week.

AS you remember, it was spring, and isn't there something about the sap getting sappier at this time of year? Maybe that was the reason I came back at all, or as the more gruesome-minded point out, a criminal always returns to the scene of the crime.

Anyhow, I walked into the office in a beautiful haze, much refreshed by my little rest. Unc wasn't there, but his unutterably charming secretary was. My cup overflowed.

"Hello, Patience, how are tricks?" I beamed. I called her Patience for obvious reasons.

"So," she blazed forth, "you came back, did you? You've got more nerve than I thought you had! Don't you talk to *me* about tricks, you bumble-brain!"

This was not the Patience I had become accustomed to.

"Now, now!" I exclaimed. "Is that any way to talk to a poor wage-slave just like yourself? We underdogs must stick together, or assuredly we will all be stuck separately."

The phone rang and Patience answered it, puckering her beautiful alabaster brows at me the while. She had to hold the receiver a foot away from her ear, as the static coming out of it was little short of deafening. It was Unc, and by the sound he must have been burned to a crisp.

"He just came in this minute," Patience was saying in the general direction of the mouthpiece. After some more crackling from the receiver she said, "Don't worry, I'll do it." Then she banged down the instrument.

"Don't tell me who that was," I said. "Let me guess."

"Now listen, feller," she said, with those heavenly hazel eyes of hers full of hate and distraction. "You've caused plenty of headaches around here, but *this* time you've hit the jackpot! You and your Duppy!" Her usually melodious voice was harsh and full of scorn.

I recoiled. I had almost forgotten about the Duppy.

"What about it?" I asked.

"Just this," she snapped. "Ever since that edition came out, nobody connected with this paper—except maybe you—has had any rest or sleep."

I maintained that sleep was only a fetish anyway, a bad habit people persisted in falling into. If looks could grind you to little bits, I would have made fine filler for a mince pie.

"Can I help it if I'm a confirmed escapist?" I suggested plaintively.

"Escape," she came back, "is the word I've been trying to think of. And you'd better turn it into action before it's too late. Your uncle just told me to keep you here at any cost until he gets here. Personally, if I never see that vacuous map of yours again, it won't be too soon."

Here was one of my cogs that was slipping. Obviously, something momentous had happened to have this lovely creature turn on me like that.

"Patience," I pleaded, "I'm genuinely perplexed. Somewhere under that curvaceous sweater of yours, must beat a heart of gold. Play the music before I have to face it."

She proceeded at once with gestures of exasperation. I grew more and more astonished, for it just didn't make any sense. It seemed my innocuous little plant had borne strange and unexpected fruit.

THE morning after edition-day is the appendix of the week on a weekly newspaper—utterly useless but prone to infection, if something newsworthy happens. From Patience's story, I gathered that the week before she had come to the office full of good-will toward all, and looking forward to a nice lazy day. However, as she was turning the key in the lock, the telephone had rung. From there on her good-will had winged out the window.

It was Mrs. Hennessy, a sour old party who lived near the Alleys. She called the paper to say that she had no sooner finished reading about the Duppy than everything started to go blooey on the farm. It had grown so bad that her hens wouldn't lay, and her cow refused to give down. She held that the paper was responsible for it all, and it was up to us to do something about it immediately or she would cancel her subscription, which had run for nigh onto forty years.

The telephone hadn't stopped ringing since, and the burden of most of the calls was similar to Mrs. Hennessy's, with but slight variations on the theme: a pump here, a milking-machine there, and so on. Then reports began to come in about cars inexplicably stalled.

It seemed it was impossible to persuade these worthy folk 't was all in fun. They knew better.

Finally the police had their turn. They wanted to know what the hell we were trying to pull off, anyhow. They had been driven half mad by people calling them up with a lot of double-talk about a Duppy. Everybody'd read it in the paper, and what were the police doing about it? Had they taken proper precautions—were they laying a trap for the thing? What were they good for, anyhow? Just sitting around wasting the taxpayers' money!

The police added in threatening fashion, that if the paper didn't make a clean-cut retraction of the whole thing in a special edition, they were going to see what steps could be taken to have Unc—and myself, if available—thrown into the hoosegow for spreading malicious falsehoods among the innocent and law-abiding citizenry.

Patience had lost all track of the sequence of events, but around in here somewhere an A.P. man caught the squib and tossed it into the news-barrel. From there on, it spread like measles after a church supper.

"Ah, Pulitzer, where is thy prize!" I cried. Patience blanched. The telephone interrupted again, as it had all during her résumé.

"Those calls," she glared at me, "are coming in from all over the country, from the same sort of people who think it's just a swimming idea to call up the aquarium to find out if Mr. Fish is in! When that started, the tender bond between us snapped."

Ordinarily a remark like this, coming from Patience, would have jarred me right out of my Congress gaiters. But the news-hound in me had set up a strenuous baying. I was already halfway out the door when she finished. I jumped into the jalopy, and without a thought that I might be turning into a Duppy's dupe myself, roared up and down the hills, headed for Little Alley's with the accelerator glued to the floorboards.

Sure enough, I had to dodge around more than a few cars stalled on the road. A heavy dew broke out on my brow, and a question-mark grew in my mind until it was large enough to make my head ache.

WHEN I pulled into the Alleys' drive, I was awed by the physical evidence of the power of the press. There were many cars, horses, buckboards and bicycles in the dooryard, and a considerable group of people, most of whom I knew.

They crowded around me, questioning, gesturing and jabbering, trying to tell me what strange things had happened to them personally. They all talked at once, but the stories were pretty much the same. Each one had had some wholly inexplicable calamity occur.

All these good people had come here to have a look at Little Alley's loom, like a pilgrimage to a sacred relic. I knew from past experience that they felt if they could touch the thing so much the better, but if anything were detachable and could be taken away, that was the best. I feared for my little friend's ancient machine. My fears, however, were an insult to Little Alley's sagacity.

I pleaded complete ignorance with them. I said I'd been away and had just come out to the farm for all the details I could gather. They plainly didn't believe me. So I advised them to watch the paper for developments, and snagged five new subscriptions on the spot.

Wooden arrows pointed the way to the barn with crude lettering on them stating: *THISAWAY*. And just inside the building itself sat Mrs. Alley in a kitchen rocker. There was a small table in front of her with a large glass jar on it whose contents made my eyes pop and a sign which bore the legend: "HERE TIS—2 BITS." She was looking for all the world like a canary who dreamed it'd swallowed the cat. "Well, for land's sakes!" she cried, when she saw me. "If it aint the newspaper gentleman! We've been doin' a right smart of business since you ran that nice ad in your paper. If it keeps up, Pa says we kin h'ist the mortgage."

"Mrs. Alley," I said, meditatively eyeing the big glass jar, overflowing with authentic two-bitses, "that was no ad. I came out to see Little Alley. Is he here?"

"Yes siree sir, he's up in the loft, mindin' that no one walks off with his loom. It's become a mite valuable, you might say. Just drop yer two-bits in the jar, an' go right up."

I flinched at such brazen ingratitude and walked up the stairs, thinking what a little scalper he'd turned out to be. This was an angle even I hadn't figured on.

UP in the barn-loft were some people curiously eying the loom in reverent silence. Little Alley was sitting on a bale of hay with arms crossed, disdainfully watching them.

When I went over to him, he greeted me triumphantly. "Hup's sure raisin' Old Ned, aint he?" he said with a grin.

"Sure is," I answered. "Seen him lately?"

"He don't turn up with these folk around," he replied, "but I seed him yestiddy, at sundown."

"Indeed! And what did he have to say for himself?" I wanted to know.

"He sez he aint had more fun since he came over on the *Mayflower*."

My God, I thought; the Duppy came over on it too!

"He sez the machine-age is sure just right, got the ol' times beat all holler. He sez he's a-gonna git you, and your newspaper too, fer makin' imperlite ree-marks about him."

I shuddered to think of what a Duppy could do to a linotype or a printing-press.

"Little Alley," I said solemnly, "you and I will have to think of some way to trap this Duppy. Fun's fun, but he's going too far."

"Aint bothered us none," the lad said succinctly.

"But how about the neighbors?" I protested. "And maybe he'll pick on you next."

"Nope. Said he wouldn't."

I saw I wasn't going to get very far with Little Alley and his capitalistic career, but I finally made him admit there was one way to get rid of the Duppy and that was to destroy the loom completely. In a weak moment the wretched creature had revealed this to the lad, and under pressure he passed it on to me. But no amount of argument would get Little Alley to assent to any such drastic procedure.

"Nobody aint gonna bust her up—leastways, not now," he said with finality—and who could blame him?

While the whole situation was fantastic, it had a certain weird plausibility, and as we talked I kept getting more entangled in my own web. There was nothing more for me to accomplish at the Alleys', so I left. For one awful moment I thought my turn had come. As I stepped on the starter of the jalopy, nothing happened. After a lot of hot and cold running sweat I found a battery connection jarred loose. I finally got going and hightailed it away from the Alleys' as fast as I had come. . . .

Getting out of the car near the office, I could hear Unc's voice booming up and down the street like wild waves on a wintry shore. I steeled myself for the coming ordeal; this would be where the man in me got roughly shaken loose from the boy.

Unc was pounding on his desk, and when he saw me his clenched fist froze halfway down. Patience turned white and sidled out in a hurry. He just sat there and stared, his mouth slowly falling open and his face assuming a sunset tinge. Then he gave a mighty heave, shook himself all over and threw up his hands in despair.

"What's the use, what's the use! I always knew you'd do it some day and I was right—you've gone and done it. You've ruined me!"

I made a placating gesture. "Unc," I proclaimed, "even the darkest hour must have its dawn. You are looking at the first faint ray of that rosy tint right now. This is no time for re-cremations or regrets; the time has come for action."

"Action," he groaned, "is just what I don't want—only a little peace and quiet in my old age."

"You misunderstand," I said. "By action, I mean subtle manipulation behind the scenes, and some fast and fancy footwork, turning imminent disaster into triumphant victory. In short, I have an idea. It might cost you some money, but I guarantee it'll be worth it."

Unc allowed as how he'd had enough of my guarantees to last him a lifetime, but things couldn't be any worse than they were. He might as well lose all as almost all; since I got him into the jam I could jolly well get him out. Then he knocked the props from under me by saying:

"Before you do anything else, I insist you get an interview somehow, somewhere, with this—this Huppy or Duppy or whatever it's called."

I LOOKED at my uncle sharply. I hadn't noticed any paper dolls on the desk, but undoubtedly the poor man was going through a very trying time indeed.

"Unc," I said as steadily as I could. "There is no Santa Claus—and there is no Duppy."

"Yes, I know," he answered testily. Then his manner changed. "I mean I *don't* know. There's no other way to account for all the screwy things that have been happening. Coincidence is out of the question. I don't know what to think any more. A little while ago we got a call that someone had seen a little man in a funny-looking hat, skating up and down the telephone wires. Anybody can see a thing like that; but by Jupiter, if the telephone company hasn't just finished telling me all their calls were being jumbled so badly that everybody was listening in on everybody else! Just talk your way around *that* one if you can!"

I told Unc there were a lot of things about the affair that gave me pause for thought; that frankly I was as bewildered as he. I said Little Alley made up this Duppy character because he was lonely. It was only natural for a kid to do that, in his situation. I wrote it up as a straight gag, thinking it would be good for a chuckle or two.

Unc asserted that an earthquake and a series of blockbusters weren't exactly his idea of a couple of chuckles.

I countered that people were an unpredictable lot. Who'd have thought that the countryside in general would turn on the paper and blame it for what was going on?

He feinted with the comment that at that they seemed to be smarter than a certain party he was loath to admit he was related to.



I hoped to get by without paying tribute, but to Pa Alley I was just another sucker.

Finally, as Round Five was coming up and we were getting nowhere sparing back and forth, I persuaded him to let me go ahead with a plan I had. Unc was half licked before I started working on him, or he never would have given in so easily. I think at that moment he would have sold the paper—lock, stock and barrel—to Little Alley, if he'd turned up with one of his jars full of two-bitses.

It always takes three times the amount of work to undo a backfiring bit of foolishness than ever went into it in the first place. When I shot my arrow into the air, where it landed I didn't care, as long as I was rid of it. How was I to know the damn' thing would turn into a homing pigeon in mid-flight and return to roost on my shoulder?

In some uncanny fashion, the introduction of the Duppy into otherwise orderly lives struck a wellspring that usually runs quietly underground, and turned it into a gusher. Temporarily, at least, this not-work spirit, this concoction, compounded of what I believed to be a seven-year-old's uninhibited imagination and some hocus-pocus on my part, had

become as real as the sunrise, an old hound dog, a made-over dress, or a Sunday sermon.

The first thing I did was to gather all the information I could—the who, when, where and what stuff. As the score of victims rolled up, I was invaded by a very strange feeling indeed, and privately agreed with my uncle that it was too long and too varied to be a mere series of coincidences, although witchcraft has always seemed that way.

The town and country bigwigs were genuinely alarmed. They feared a real old-time witch hunt would soon be under way if something wasn't done to break the spell at once, and anything might happen.

THE next move was to print a broadside and have it as widely distributed as possible. It stated that, whereas the Duppy was still at large, the resourcefulness of the people would surely be able to curb the menace. To this end the paper offered its columns to each and every suggestion on how best to get rid of the pest. In addition; substantial cash prizes would be given to those who,

in the judgment of a group of prominent citizens, came the nearest to solving the problem. Of course, letters from subscribers only would be accepted in the contest. No one else would be eligible for a prize. But as the paper realized the urgency of their quest, it was willing to place anyone on the new-subscriber list by telephone. If their payments were in for a year's subscription before the announcements of the prize awards, they would be fully eligible.

Of course, this is the world's oldest come-on, and I doubt if we would have ruffled a feather in ordinary times. As it was, however, we almost doubled the circulation in a few days.

Events moved far too fast for that forthright solid citizen, my uncle. He was among the alien corn and didn't recognize a juicy bumper crop when he saw it. Only when the returns were in did he finally believe it wasn't just another division of the general bewitchment. I requested a part interest in the paper in lieu of a raise, and he was so befuddled he docilely signed the agreement with a flourish.

I saw to it that our regular issue carried headline streamers about the con-

test and repeated the information which the broadcast contained.

As we started in on the special Duppy edition, I began to feel as though I'd be a smart apple in any barrel, and that recognition of this was long overdue.

Then things began to happen. Copy no sooner started arriving at the linotype than that up-to-now faithful machine turned on a tantrum which had the place in an uproar. No matter what Louis did, it insisted on throwing out its matrices. They flew all over the place with considerable violence.

The entire staff spent a whole day on hands and knees retrieving them. In the end we had to send the copy a considerable distance to be set up.

The press, when its turn came, was just as bad. Cogs started jumping out all of a sudden and the thing got hopelessly jammed. With much foreboding we sent our forms away to be printed. Just where was a dark secret, for by this time we were all on the verge of panic. Even the hard-boiled eggs around the place turned soft and gooey. Louis the Lino went on a seven-day binge with the Cob County corn, and Patience had a nervous breakdown.

Finally we got the edition printed, and it was a lulu. It listed innumerable ways of catching a Duppy. There were even letters about the care and feeding of such when caught, also many charms and incantations which the writers swore would make anything absolutely Duppy-proof. This issue is now a collector's item.

The judges met in solemn conclave and after much soul-searching—and a little prodding from me, who was acting in an advisory capacity—unanimously awarded first prize for the following sage advice:

Gents

Thars only one fer-sartin way of gettin a holt of this here beastie whos causin sich misschif. I know cause Grandpappy had the same trouble oncet with a house we was all livin in. It got infestid with evil speeruts until they was everywhar like varmin. He set afire to her thats whut he did. An when thar werent no more an smolderin ashes to the house we was never took with truble agin. This here looms gotta be got an bernt to ashes every littel bit of it. Thatll do her fer sartin.
See you at the bonfire.

Yours
Abner Oakes

I pointed out to the judges that whether the advice was good, bad or indifferent, a big spectacular burning of the loom would undoubtedly go far to break the spell. How much of what Little Alley had told me about

Duppy destruction influenced my urging is my own business.

I was appointed a committee of one to see what I could do about buying the loom. Not that they trusted me, but I was the only one equipped to handle such a delicate mission. They made me promise no tricks, under threat of acquiring a nice suit of tar and feathers and a free ride on a rail.

Business at the Alley farm had slacked off, but was still satisfactory. Mr. Alley had come in from the fields to spell Ma Alley at the ever-brimming glass jar. I had hoped to get by this time without paying the hateful tribute, but to Pa Alley I was just another sucker—and into the jar went my two-bits.

LITTLE ALLEY looked as though he hadn't moved off his bale of hay since I had last seen him.

He greeted me with: "Hi, Pastepot! Pa's thinkin' of buyin' another farm."

"Hey," I said, "hold your horses! What with? I thought he was going to pay the mortgage on this one with the money you're taking in right now."

"That's right," he replied complacently. "He's gonna buy the other farm with the money they're gonna pay me for the loom."

"Now what makes you think anyone wants to buy that worm-eaten old loom?" I said bravely, trying to get back on a bargaining basis after his nerve-shattering remark.

"Easy!" he said. "They hafta git rid of the Duppy, don't they? They hafta git rid of the loom fer that, don't they? The loom's mine, aint it? Pa give it to me. They hafta buy it, don't they? I like the ol' loom; she's still makin' money, aint she? The Duppy's my friend, aint he? So I aint sellin' but fer enough to help Pa buy his farm. He's got his heart set on that. 'Twouldn't do to let him down, would it?"

Only a statesman could do anything with an argument like that, and I'm no statesman. Bargaining with Little Alley was like betting against a sure thing.

"O.K.," I said meekly. "I'll meet your price. But by the way, did you ever know anyone by the name of Abner Oakes?"

"Yup," said the lad promptly. "He's m' uncle."

THE burning of the loom will go into the annals of our part of the country as the greatest event of all time. When Gabriel blows his horn they'll still be so busy talking about it that they won't hear him.

Everything went wrong from the start, and when Unc approached the thing to set fire to it, with a flaming torch specially created for the occasion

by the Boy Scouts, he fell flat on his face halfway there. The torch went out and had to be ignominiously relit. Unc, however, needed no relighting, only a little assistance getting to his feet.

Finally, the loom, which had been periodically drenched with kerosene, blazed beautifully against the starlit night, and a great cry went up from a multitude of throats whose owners had gathered to witness this supreme moment.

As a matter of fact, the loom blazed so successfully that a few minutes later the fire alarm sounded. By the count, I think thirteen houses had to have their roofs hosed down that night, because of the vengeful sparks from our epic bonfire.

When it was all over and there was nothing left of the loom but smoldering embers, I breathed a great sigh of relief—along with the gathered crowd. I took Patience playfully by the hand and sauntered jauntily up to the glowing remains. As we got within the charmed circle and were watching the swirl of smoke curl upward with fascinated eyes, something gently spiraled down in front of me. I picked it up out of curiosity—and by the dying firelight I recognized a wild-turkey feather. I crossed myself quickly, but when I got back to the car, all four tires were flat.

It was sometime after these earth-shaking events occurred, and when calm and serenity were once more restored to our beautiful countryside, that I felt an urge to pay a visit to Little Alley.

With a certain amount of effort I found him on the new farm,—which was a pretty fancy piece of bottom-land,—fishing in the little brook that flowed through it.

He greeted me very cordially, which was the least he could do, and we talked back and forth about old times. Then he laid his fishpole down and looked at me solemnly with those wonderful wide blue eyes of his.

"You know, Pastepot," he said, "it's kind of lonely around here since the Duppy"—he hesitated,—"since the Duppy dee-parted."

"Keep a stiff upper lip, young fellow," I adjured him. "We all have to lose old friends sometime."

"I know," he said, "but I kind of have my eye on an old spinnin'-wheel I found in the attic here. Wonder what'd come out of it?"

"Little Alley," I cried in horror, "haven't you any conscience at all?"

"Not no more'n what I hafta, to git along," he replied.

Then he looked at me quizzically.

"Pastepot," he said, heaving a deep sigh, "you'll make a real smart feller one of these days—if'n you ever git over bein' so dumb!"



A Name for Baby

A brief short story, by
WALTER C. BROWN

I REMEMBER it was down on the charts as Hatafuta Island, but the first thing we did after cleaning out the Japs was change its name to Hotfoot Island, and the new name sure fitted. The place was nothing but a big chunk of sand and coral and mangy palms, roasted by a blowtorch sun. When we walked across the beach, we picked up our feet, like a cat on hot bricks.

But the Nips, they loved that brassy sun. Almost every day their planes came roaring down out of the blinding heart of it, trying to knock out our airfield. The Japs were sore about that airfield; you see, they'd built it themselves, just before we took over.

Our antiaircraft batteries were strung all around the field, and naturally there was great rivalry between the gun-crews to see who could ring up the best score. We had a scoreboard over by the hangars, and us A-A fellows were just as proud of our marks as the boys who fought upstairs and kept count by painting little Jap flags on the fuselage.

Well, any time you looked at that scoreboard, Crew Five was heading the list. That was my outfit. We were mighty proud of being top gun, and more than a little cocky too, I

guess. We'd had a good lead, and were holding onto it—and we had Sergeant Larry Madigan. Larry was natural-born to handle an A-A gun.

Crew Seven was the only other outfit we really had to watch out for. They had big Sergeant Swenson. That blond Minnesota Swede was a good gunner too, but not in Larry Madigan's class. Swenson liked to pick off his Zeros away up high, like ducks on the wing, but Larry liked them best coming in fast and low.

"I guess I've got a good eye for the infighting," Larry would say. You see, Larry Madigan was a prizefighter. Maybe you've seen him in the ring, or remember his name from the sport pages—"Kayo" Madigan. He had just started to mow his way through the light-heavies when Uncle Sam's bugles began to blow.

Larry was one of the smart fighters, fast and cool and clever. He was a nice-looking kid, and you'd never've spotted him for a fighter just by looking at him, nor by the way he talked, either. In spite of all the bouts he'd been in, the only ring mark he had was a slight droop under his left eye-

brow, where he'd been butted one time.

But for some reason, Larry didn't talk about his ring career, and if any of us forgot and called him "Kayo" he got real sore. "The name's Larry," he'd snap. "Any guy doesn't like it, can stick to Sergeant."

Well, as I said, Crew Five had been doing all right for itself on the scoreboard, until Larry Madigan went and got himself a medal. You'd think he'd have been proud to stand up there front-and-center while the C.O. read the citation and then pinned a shiny new decoration on his chest. But not Larry; he'd stood there as if he was facing a firing-squad.

And that was the day, the hour, and the minute Larry started going off the beam. Only at first none of us connected it with the medal; we thought it was something entirely different. We'd seen Larry mooning around, staring at a girl's picture, then at a pocket calendar, and then back at the picture.

"He's worrying about Myra," we'd told each other, nodding wisely.

Myra is Larry's wife, and a very pretty little chick she is too. We'd never met her, except on a photograph, but we always called her Myra.

That's the way it is with a gun-crew—pictures get passed around and letters get read out and talked over until it's as if we were all in the same family.

SO we guys talked it over, and I was elected to talk to Larry and try to make him snap out of it.

"Look, Larry," I said to him, "Myra's going to be all right. Babies get born every day, thousands of 'em. You've nothing to worry about, so pull yourself together, kid. You know you're not as sharp as you were, and it's showing up in our score."

Larry gave me a bitter look. "You don't know what a spot I'm in," he said. "I guess Myra'll be all right—it's sort of worn every day, thousands of 'em. You've nothing to worry about, so pull yourself together, kid. You know you're not as sharp as you were, and it's showing up in our score."

"They sure will," I said heartily. "You've got one of the best, Larry. They don't give that one out every day."

It was the worst thing I could've said, for Larry groaned, and I could see his spirits going down like a Zero with its tail chewed off. "Look, if Myra sees all that stuff in the papers, I'm sunk!" he said. "And it had to happen just when it's time for the baby!"

"Are you trying to tell me Myra'll be sore because you won a medal?" I demanded. "Of all the screwy—"

"Oh, shut up!" Larry snapped. "It isn't the medal, it's the damn' publicity that goes with it—all that stuff about my fights. Myra doesn't know I was ever in the ring. I never told her."

"So what?" I said. "It's an honest way to make a living, isn't it? You talk as if it was a disgrace."

Then Larry told me about how he met Myra. He'd been wandering around town on leave, and it had started to rain, and he'd ducked into the nearest shelter—a public library. And there was Myra behind the desk, Myra Stevens—

"One look, and I was overboard with a splash," Larry said. "Traveling around like I did, you meet plenty of girls, all hopped up for a good time, and nothing else. Myra isn't like that. She's cute and plenty lively, but she likes other things too: books and music and a nice house—things like that. You know what I mean—"

Sure, I'd known what Larry meant. All you needed was a look at Myra's picture. They don't grow on bushes, nice girls like Myra, and you're a very lucky guy if one of them falls in love with you.

"Well, why didn't you tell Myra who you were?" I asked. "Keeping quiet like that makes it look as if you're ashamed of your profession."

"I wasn't ashamed, but I was afraid to say anything," Larry answered. "I didn't have much time left and I was afraid she wouldn't marry me if she found out. You see, Myra doesn't go for fights; she thinks it's sort of low-life stuff—"

"How do you know that?" I asked. "Well, when I brought up the subject a couple of times," Larry said, "sort of feeling around for an opening to tell her, I soon saw that she thought fighting was a roughhouse racket. So I let it ride. Of course I knew I'd have to tell her eventually, but I didn't want it to happen this way—with me thousands of miles away!"

"Cheer up, Larry," I said. "Maybe it won't hit the papers after all. And even if it does—well, Myra's your wife, and there's the baby coming. That's all that'll count with her. You'll see."

But Larry couldn't cheer up. He'd sit staring at Myra's picture, trying to figure how soon mail from back home could reach him, and wondering whether the baby had come before Myra saw the write-up in the papers.

And with Larry off the beam, Crew Five wasn't doing so well on the scoreboard. Larry's heart wasn't in his work. He got a swivel-neck trying to watch two directions at once—west for the Japs, and east for the mail plane. Crew Seven drew up even with us on the score, and Crew Four was crowding both of us.

"If Larry don't snap out of it soon, we'll be lucky to finish last!" Dan Bailey growled to me. Dan's the soursup of our crew. "Swede Swenson aint watchin' for baby-mail—he's watchin' for Japs, exclusive."

Well, one day a silver-wing transport came sailing in from the east, and there was mail aboard. And plenty of it was for Larry; half the sports-writers in the country had sent him congratulations on the medal, and most of them enclosed clippings about it. They sure had given Larry a good spread in the papers.

But there was no letter from Myra. We did the best we could to keep Larry bucked up, but it wasn't much use. And we didn't feel any too cheerful ourselves. Crew Four had pulled up even with us, and Crew Seven was two up. That was hard to take.

"Listen, Larry," we said, "you're the best damn' gunner in the whole battery—when you put your mind on what you're doing. We had the lead, and now we've lost it, and those monkeys in Seven and Four are giving us the horse-laugh. You're throwing us down, kid!"

"Honest, I'm sorry, guys," Larry said. "I'll snap out of it."

The Japs had come over strong that day, and we knocked down a pair of Zeros, but Larry messed up a beautiful chance at a big bomber that came

tearing in and laid a row of eggs so close to our main fuel-dump it wasn't a bit funny.

"Who in hell ever invented love and babies and all that stuff, anyway?" Dan Bailey sputtered.

Larry seemed kind of ashamed about that bomber too. He braced up for a while, and we managed to pull up even with Crew Four, but we couldn't overhaul Swenson's gun. Larry just wasn't as good at picking them off, that's all. He didn't have that old gleam in his eye when they came roaring in at us. He tried hard enough, but he was just a workman then, not an artist at it, like before.

That had gone on for almost a week. We didn't get any more mail, and when a story got around that a transport with sacks of mail aboard had met up with a skylful of Zeros, and had gone down into the drink, Larry was about ready for the strait-jacket. He was positive there'd been a letter from Myra in that lost cargo. He sat up nights, trying to write a letter, and tearing up one sheet of paper after another.

Then the mails came through again. There was more newspaper stuff for Larry—and one thin V-letter. We knew that one was from Myra, by the way Larry grabbed it. His eyes swallowed the words, and then he let out a terrific whoop.

"Everything's okay, guys, everything's okay!" he shouted, jumping around like a lunatic in the hot sand. "It's a boy! It's a boy! Seven pounds, four ounces!"

We crowded around, slapping Larry on the back, and I grabbed the chance to ask, "Did she see those write-ups in the papers, Larry?"

"You bet she saw 'em," Larry beamed.

"Then she's not sore at you?" I asked.

"Sore!" Larry boomed out scornfully. "Listen—guess what Myra says she's named the kid?"

"Larry, Jr.?" I guessed.

"Better than that!" Larry chuckled. "She's naming him *Kerry Owen Madigan*. Catch on? *K. O. Madigan*! *Kayo*—same as my ring name! Says she's sure proud of me! Some girl, eh, guys?"

CREW Five was soon making out all right again, with Larry back in form. We pushed out into the lead again, and we stayed top-gun after that. Larry was a guy clean out of this world—he was picking 'em out of the sky as if they were clay pigeons in a shooting gallery. If those Japs had been smart, they'd have laid off that Hotfoot run until Larry Madigan got back to earth again. But then, how could the Japs know what name Myra was going to give that baby?

Legends of the Tuscarora

IT is customary for the Navy, in time of war, to withhold information concerning its ships. The U.S.S. *Tuscarora* is the lone exception, for there is scarcely an old "fleet man" who has not boasted and told wondrous stories of this monstrous vessel. Almost every feature of her construction has received wide and elaborate publicity.

No one is quite sure when the *Tuscarora* was launched. Men who claim to have participated in her construction are, however, agreed that she was launched three times, due to her size. Since the shipways could not accommodate her entire hull, the bow was launched upon completion, to make way for the midships section. This, in turn, was launched to permit construction of her stern.

Old-timers disagree as to the overall length of the *Tuscarora*. That she was a monster seems obvious. Her armor was eighteen inches thick. She carried sixty-four forty-inch guns which once led to a threatened lawsuit.

At the time, she was in the Yellow Sea on maneuvers. No one knows who was responsible, but it appears that in some way, her guns were given too much elevation. There was a flash and a roar as the forty-inchers were fired.

A few seconds later a farmer in Minnesota, peacefully plowing his field, heard the whistle of the giant projectile and, popeyed with amazement, saw a direct hit scored on his newly constructed outhouse. His first impression was that a wandering meteor of some size had crashed there, but closer examination proved it to be a shell from the *Tuscarora*. The whole affair was eventually settled out of court and kept very hush-hush. Such publicity seemed undesirable for the great battlewagon.

As an indication of her space, it should be noted that the *Tuscarora* had sixty-nine decks and, curiously enough, a straw bottom which proved the cause of her ultimate loss.

The fourth deck boasted an eighteen-hole golf course. On the sixth deck there was a thousand-yard rifle-range and infiltration course.

The ship was hinged in three places to permit turns. At that, there were only two places in the Pacific and one in the Atlantic where she could make a full turn. The crew members proud-

One of America's heirloom stories that is still being—fabricated.

**by HAROLD
SANFORD MOORE**

The writer recently returned from duty in the South Pacific. While aboard ship, he talked with Navy, Marine and Army men to whom he is indebted for most of these stories of the mythical U.S.S. Tuscarora. This is by no means a complete chronicle, for every man has his variations, just as the woodsmen of the north country have their tall stories of Paul Bunyan and his deeds.

ly stated that she could do seventy-two knots without showing smoke and that under full speed, her bow left the water like a motorboat.

Due to her size, the *Tuscarora* took two days to cross the equator or the international date line. In the latter case, it always created difficulties in the mess-halls—particularly if the day was Wednesday, going west. This meant that those in the bow would have fish for dinner, since it became Friday. However, those in the stern didn't get fish until the next day.

The *Tuscarora's* equivalent of lifeboat drill was always involved, for she used destroyers for lifeboats. Her torpedo tubes could not legitimately be called by that name, for they fired submarines and PT boats instead of torpedoes.

Life aboard the *Tuscarora* was good for the enlisted men. The officers did K.P. and other menial tasks. Enlisted men could not recall ever having stood in chow lines, for they were served at tables beautifully laid with gleaming silver and fine linen. On Sunday morning, breakfast was served in bed. Payday came regularly, twice a week.

Once each year, there was a migration to the opposite end of the ship, where the men bivouacked on the thirty-third deck. This deck had been given a layer of rich soil, free of insects. Sod grass grew thick and soft. Hiking to the bivouac was unnecessary for the *Tuscarora* had its own subway system and escalators.

Great care was exercised by the men during their brief watches in the crow's-nest, for it was so lofty that oxy-

gen masks were necessary in the rarefied atmosphere. Indeed, there was once an unlucky individual who suffered severe frostbite, though the ship was, at the time, crossing the equator.

Ship's inspection would have been quite a problem had it not been for the fortunate circumstance that the captain was also a licensed air pilot. He customarily inspected the ship from the cockpit of a P-38. It was quite a thrilling sight to see him zooming up or diving down the companionways.

The *Tuscarora* performed brilliantly in the First World War. It is now permissible to divulge the fact that the entire A.E.F. of that war was transported to France in the Number Three hold. It was during this crossing that it was discovered impractical for her to lay a smokescreen. It seems that so much smoke, belching from her funnels, caused a total eclipse and thus indicated the *Tuscarora's* proximity to the enemy.

Gangplanks were never used for disembarking. Instead, the passengers were given parachutes and made the six-hundred-foot leap to the dock in that manner. Generally, however, the *Tuscarora* was moored to an island. At least once in her lifetime, this resulted in a geographical change.

DURING a cruise in the South Seas, she was anchored several days to the island of Java. When she again got under way, the anchor dragged up a huge section of the ocean bottom which she carried on her great hook for several weeks. It was subsequently discovered and the substance cast off but, being dry by that time, it floated around until it struck a reef. There it remains to this day—a complete South Sea island—complete with lagoon and volcano.

The problem of food supply aboard the *Tuscarora* was solved quite simply. A vast herd grazed contentedly on the twenty-first deck. Twice a year there was a great roundup and enough beef was butchered to last for six months.

It is quite conceivable that the *Tuscarora* would still be afloat, were it not for the whimsy of a hungry sea cow which ate a hole in the straw bottom. No one knows where the *Tuscarora* sank but the sea cow—and she won't talk.

I don't believe sea cows can even moo.



*"O Unknown God!" I cried, "Make visible now your power! Cut down Ammon!"
The temple shook; with a crash, a lightning-shaft smote through the temple roof.*

The Bronze Warrior

A Complete Novel by David Cheney

Who wrote "The Son of Minos" and
"The Treasure of Tyron."



Myenides the Bronze Warrior by grace of the Minos and the Immortal Gods, and son of Phrasys King of Haggia upon Crete, Ambassador new returned from the sacred city Thebes upon the Nile—inscribes these disks in memory of Haremheb Pharaoh of Egypt, by command of the King of Kings:

*TO THE UNKNOWN GOD,
THE ONE-GOD, GLORY!*



IN the wisdom of the Eternal Ones, the time came when galleys of Crete should pass over Pontus to the land of Egypt. The royal ship of the fleet was a new galley of war. Upon her forked prow she bore a great eye, for she was named after that brave *Minos-eye* sunk at the battle of Phadra when first the fierce Dorian Greeks smote the Cretan lands. Her timbers were of cypress wood from forests north of Taras.* Her masts were two, lofty to lift to sea-winds the bull's-hide sails. And this new galley *Minos-eye* carried two hundred oars. She was moored in the harbor for me: for I was to be her captain.

And Minos, Lord of the Mid Sea, summoned me to Cnossos. Now, my father the King of Haggia had revealed ere this the will of the King of Kings: that I should be named ambassador to the Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon—that I was destined for Thebes. And my father the King was at that time staying with the Minos in the shining city-palace. So I went up in haste from Haggia to Kephala Mount, to Labyrinth, the glory of Crete.

And Deukos, Lord of the Palace, escorted me at once by the great stairs to the Hall of State.

Minos sat upon the ancient throne of Crete, a chair of stone all blazing in beaten gold. The tiara of the sacred asp was upon his forehead; the purple robe enfolded him; and the ivory staff of rule was in his hand. By him, in the stone woman-seat Minos had caused to be carved for her, sat Ariadne his Queen. And too near for the ease of those who love the Great King, the fierce new King of Phaestos stood leaning upon his jeweled sword of Mycenaean bronze. There was evil in the throne-room, and the Lord of Phaestos was its spirit.

High over the princes clustered near the sun-throne rose the proud white head of my father the King of Haggia. I was glad—for his counsels were just and wise, and his heart was warm to the Great King. And Phaestos was hierarch of Ammon and of Ptah upon Crete, and a man of wiles who would see our temples fetid with the stench of Egypt's animal gods. But my father served only the Unknown God.

Minos reached out to me the ivory scepter.

"Myenides," said he, "stand upon my right side. Every galley of Minoa is war-song of heroes. By might of the fleet, we keep the sea clear of pirates and the Dorian host back from Mycenaean coasts. The builders of our new ship have given the beauty of cypress beams to the makers of song. And of what great deeds of heroes in shining brass the bards shall sing, the master of our new *Minos-eye* shall be the shaper and the source."

"The ships are the walls of Minoa," said my father Phrasys, with a nod of his great white head.

"Truly, the great galleys are the walls of Minoa," answered Minos. "And he who sinks the fleet shall breach these walls, and for the last time, flame and ruin and death shall blaze upon ancient Labyrinth. But far be the day, O Eleutherian* Zeus!"

"Zeus hear him!" cried the lords of the court.

"The barbarians of the north wax too strong for us," the Great King told his court, speaking no word of the other and more secret mission to Egypt that was mine. "We have built this mightiest of sea-houses to send to the Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon an embassy, to seek of him ships and men against the savage foe. And of this embassy we have named as archon the son of Phrasys, King of Haggia, he who of blood-right is Bronze Warrior of Crete, defender of the coasts. Into his keeping, O Lords of Crete, we entrust our ship and the embassy to Egypt."

The Lord of Phaestos smote his bull's-hide shield. He bent knee to the Great King. Wrath flamed in his eyes.

"Send Myenides to weave garlands with the maidens in the Garden of Eros upon Labyrinth roof," he cried, and his words smoked. "Am I not King of Phaestos, Prince of the South Shore, ruler of the East Fleet? Do I not know Egyptian? Have I not lived in Thebes? This embassy to the Pharaoh is fateful—and the Pharaoh's heart is hard. Cunning should be that tongue, wise the wits, ripe the judgment of him who would bend Pharaoh's will to ours! And when I heard what was in your heart, O Minos, straightway I sent to you the disk of clay bearing my offer:

*Modern Taranto, in southern Italy.

*An epithet of the god Zeus, meaning "the Helper."



"I will go to Egypt and see the Pharaoh for Minoa's sake. This embassy is for men, not for boys! I will go to Thebes—"

Then I raged forward, my bronze blade half out of jeweled sheath.

"The Lord of Phaestos swells with windy words," I cried. "Am I a boy? Let him meet me in the Arena: aye, with bare fists will I meet him in the manner of the Greeks! The Lords of Crete are witnesses that I am ready. Let them behold who will prove the better man—this strutting lord of Phaestos, or the Bronze Warrior."

The King of Kings turned darkly upon the King of Phaestos.

"Have we asked your counsel? We had your disk. We assembled the lords of our chamber and read them your message. The King of Phaestos, said they, grows overgreat when he seeks to tell Minos, ruler of the Mid Sea, what he shall do in crises or who shall be his ambassador. He who you call boy has been well proved. The Prince of Haggia is young; but he as well as you knows Egyptian. He has the wisdom of his grandfather Nestor. He shall speak to Egypt, and Egypt will hear him.

"But as for this insult to our embassy: Phaestos, you have heard Myenides. Are you ready?"

There was a faint smile on Minos' lips.

The King of Phaestos started back one step and turned to stare at me. "I meet *him* in the Arena!" he roared. "I am King of Phaestos—"

"And I, Bronze Warrior of Crete," I answered proudly, "Prince of Haggia and of Zeus-blood and Minos-kin. Can the scented lord say more? But doubtless the lord fears the dusty sands—"

"I fear sand—" began the King of Phaestos blankly.

"The world knows the Cretans are lovers of pretty boots," said I. "And who among Cretan folk loves good boot-leather more than the brave Lord of Phaestos? He treads into this

royal court in knee-high, golden sheep-skin with crimson flowers upon his shanks, and jewels precious beyond the eyes of Hecate flashing magic at each stride. It were pity to soil such leather in the Arena dust."

There was laughter; and the King of Phaestos turned savagely on me.

"Get you to the Arena, sea-spawn!" he rasped. "When I am done, the Prince of Haggia will no longer hunger to sail to Nile's mouth. Yet, by Maat, I prefer good bronze blades to bloodying knuckles on this boy!"

"You have spoken," said I, calm again. "First, the red bronze; then, the bare fists; and if bare fists, despite my youth, draw not red as fluent as can hard bronze, I will go back to Haggia and tend the herds of Phrasyss."

My father smiled, for he himself had taught me to box in the manner of the Greeks. The Great King rose and passed down the steps of stone and out under the ivory horns of the portal to the Arena where once, slaying the Minotaur, he had won his queen. And I and those with me followed after him.

We strode out upon the sanded floor. The sun poured upon the yellow sands. Aye, they were as yellow in that strong light as when Minos won the golden princess. The Lords of Crete sat upon the wide stone seats, and with them many ladies of the court. All the benches were a-shimmer with the shining of their silks.

Now I stood in the midst of the Arena, my bronze-bright blade in my hand. Upon my head was that high silk-tufted helmet of gleaming bronze you know so well; and upon breast and back, plates of chased-bronze lozenges sewn on quilted flax-cloth.

The Lord of Phaestos came bearing a great shield, double-circled, such as sea-warriors bear, of bull's-hide painted with flowers. My shield was small and round, of plain hide with a boss of gold in the heart. My shield was light; but that which the King of Phaestos bore, he could scarce lift from the yellow sands. For men bear such shields on hollow ships to rest against the deck when battles rage. And men say there were five layers of bull's-hide in that targe.

Then came Athenian slave-girls from the Palace, bearing amphoræ of holy wine. We poured libations to the gods, and Minos lifted his great voice and called:

"Lay on, O heroes of Crete, that Crete may see who is the better man!"

We circled each other, looking for a sword-path. And I saw that the bronze sword he bore was longer and wider than mine. But he was soft from high-living, and heavy, and weighed down by targe and sword; and I, the Bronze Warrior, was light.

So Phaestos watched me warily out of evil black eyes that glittered in the

light; and he saw his opening and smote. Aye, the blow he struck might have split the skull of Minotaur, but I caught the stroke upon my shield. And the blade sheared off a hand's-breadth of the brim and clanged up on my left arm; but the good bronze armor held.

I sprang aside and darted a swift feint for his dark face. He swang upward his great shield to take the thrust; but springing aside, I slashed at his shield-arm, and red blood flowed.

The mighty shield fell from his stricken arm. It clanged upon the yellow sand, and the golden dust rose about us in a cloud. Then with a roar, he charged.

And I caught his sword at the hand-guard of the hilt with my blade and twisted hard; and the red bronze flew out over the Arena and rang upon the yellow sands. The crowd shouted from the seats of stone.

"A sword's-length, O Lord of Phaestos, is distance too great between us," said I. "We have done with bronze. Now for hard muscle and two fists!"

And I flung off my black shield and sheathed my blade, and stood over against Phaestos with doubled fists in the manner of the Greeks.

"Let a slave fetch my good bronze blade," growled the Lord of Phaestos. "A bronze blade is mete for warriors, but fisticuffs is sport for boys."

"You asked for swords, and I gave you blade for blade," said I. "Now, for the sport, we will be boys again. I wager you a golden cup I can hang a black ring on either eye before you can touch me with knuckle-bones!"

"Back to your galley," retorted the King of Phaestos. "Barter your bangles and pretty pots with the Siculi*: it will go hard if you win not enough electrum to get you a girl and a jug of red wine. There's adventure for a boy in such trade you will not find in hundred-gated Thebes! Who in the great palace of Amenhotep will listen to the patter of a vender of bangles and pots? A sea-pirate lost in the splendors of Thebes!"

"Who in all Crete will listen to slurs on the sea-trade?" I answered, turning to the broad seats of stone and the Labyrinth folk. "By Apollo. I am a trader and a captain of galleys! I have fetched tin for our bronze even from the Cassiterides† that lie over the rim of the world. My keels have cleft the whale-path from Nile and Adria‡ to the sands of Africa. The

*Ancient inhabitants of Sicily.

†The Scilly Isles off the coast of Cornwall, England, one of the earliest known sources of tin.

‡On the Adriatic; anciently, a seaport: now inland.

world is for youth, O Phaestos! The trade of the world is for youth. On what has Crete waxed strong, overbrimmed her great jars with oil and wheat and wine, heaped high the treasures of Minos with ivory and with gold? The trade of the world, O Phaestos! Of the Siculi, of new Troy the phoenix-city, and of Thebes! The trade of the world!"

And I sprang upon him, shouting: "Guard yourself, Phaestos! For I, the sea-trader, can also trade blow for blow, and it will go hard if this day I draw not enough blood in the barter to send you and your pretty boots a-strutting into Yaru, if Osiris at the judgment bar let you pass into the Happy Fields. On guard!"

And I smote Phaestos with the straight arm and closed his left eye. He, helpless before my winged fists and all ignorant of the Greek sport, lost his wits and sprang at me and clasped me mightily round the waist. We wrestled so, but he had more weight. He bent me backward, and he lifted me high, and he dashed me down upon the yellow sands.

I rose again, reeling. Aye then, O Minos, as you must have seen, I was raging. I leaped against Phaestos, and my hard fists beat upon his soft face a terrible drumming. But he drew back and shook himself, and blood flowed from his mouth and nose.

While he stood dazed, shaking his black head, I smote him with the straight-arm upon the point of his chin. He fell upon the sand and lay still. And Minoa shouted from the benches of stone.



In that boxing, O Minos, I sowed that which I reaped in Egypt. Aye, it was near to being the loosing of my Khu* to the halls of death and the judgment-seat. But for the Hebrew Nestor, him whom in Egypt they called *Scourge of God*, and in the palace of the Pharaoh, Prince Moses, these disks on which I write were unchased clay.

But in the Arena, I turned from my fallen foe, saluted the lords and ladies of Crete, and walked slowly toward the paved way that leads to the sea.

And for trade in the city of Thebes, we took aboard the great galley *Minos-eye*: one hundred and thirty palace jars, art of the master-potterer Poictes†; a thousand bracelets jeweled and electron-bright; a hundred chains of shining amber; and seventy tapering swords of bronze. And we took aboard twelve hundred ingots of tin and ninety-seven of silver, and two hundred and thirty-two hides of the wild ox from the heart of lands north of Eridanus.‡

All these were stored away, and the ship ready for the faring.

CHAPTER TWO



Y father King Phrasys had promised to meet me by the sea, ere we cleared for Egypt. He had named a little hollow in the sandy cliffs

of the shore a scant thousand paces from the pier to which the King's galley was moored: for the hollow seemed remote from spying ears. And there I found him waiting. But the westward side of that hollow was thickly wooded, and I liked it not.

As the metal of my boots scraped on the shingle, the tall figure of my father turned—and he made a motion of caution. When I was by him, he whispered:

"I thought I heard a sound in the wood of the cliff. Do you hear sounds?"

I shook my head.

"The spies of Phaestos are everywhere," said he. "I have that to say I would not have reach hostile ears. . . . Well, you go to Thebes"

"The greatest city man ever built," said I.

My father sighed "Of Thebes, I have happy memories," he said, "and

*The divine spark; the soul was man's *Kha*; his double, the *Ba*

†That is, in Greek, *Maker* From the same root comes poet The Palace Jars are among the most beautiful ever made by man.

‡Ancient name for the Po River in northern Italy, one of Europe's oldest trade-routes.



of the golden city Horizon-of-the-Sun's-Disk. It was there I met young Tut-ankh-Ammon, who then worshipped the One God. He married the sister of Chu-m'-eten, she who is now Queen of Egypt. And when the boy came first into power, his name was then known as *Tut-ankh-Aten* because in the rays of the sun is the power of the One God manifest. But the priests of Ammon at Thebes plotted together; and they beguiled Tut-ankh-Aten to turn his heart from adoration of the One God and bow down to their idols; and he made his name Tut-ankh-Ammon.* And Tut-ankh-Ammon caused the name of the One God to be cut off from all the monuments of Egypt.

"And in that city of the One God, too," continued my father Phrasys, "was the little princess Hathane, a lovely child. We were often together, she and I. And I peeled olive staffs for her and for me to use as we walked together. . . . Hist! Did you hear that?"

"A twig snapped," said I. "Some beast in the wood—it is nothing."

"The gods grant it! Well, I told the little maid that the peeled staff of olive wood was sacred to the One God. Look you, she is now woman grown, and bides in the palace of old Amenhotep where Tut-ankh-Ammon dwells in Thebes. I have heard travelers' tales that she can ride a horse or shoot a bow as well as any man in Egypt: aye, she is a huntress mighty in Egypt. Beware the darts of Hathane, boy, for it is said that not since Helen bewitched the Trojans and the Greeks has woman born of men been as fair as Hathane of Egypt, the Huntress!"

I stirred uneasily. "I have heard of Hathane," I said, "She is for Babylon. I will see the face of Hathane your huntress when I visit the Double

*More commonly written Tut-ankh-amen; but here given as written on these Cretan disks.



House.* But, Father, there is matter more urgent in this hour than love of woman!"

"Is there so?" asked my father, and smiled. "I think kings from of old have yielded thrones in barter for a woman's love. You will be King of Haggia after me—aye, and you stand next in succession to the throne of Phaestos should this strutting lord of the South Palace die before you. What queen can the world give comparable to Hathane the daughter of Pharaoh? Beauty of form and face has she—a good thing, for these hold the love of man; but beauty of mind has Hathane the Huntress also, a rarer excellence in woman. Myenides, when you behold the face of Hathane, you will see none in Egypt but Hathane—and you will sue for her of the Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon!"

"If I love not, I marry not," said I. "But the King of Kings has asked me to seek out the Prince Moses. There are Lower Egypt and Upper Egypt—and these are divided, you have said, into many nomes. And I have heard Moses fled from Egypt upon slaying a taskmaster—"

"When you come into Thebes," directed my father, "cut you a staff of the wood of the olive tree, and peel it.

"Go into the Marketplace of the Wine Merchants. There stands an ancient stone palace with four great columns before it. Sit down by the last pillar as if weary, with your back against the stone and the staff of olive

*Palace of the Pharaoh.

wood across your knees. A beggar will come—"

"Hst!" I whispered hoarsely, seizing his arm. "I did hear something stirring in the wood!"

We listened, but all was still. I was half minded to search through the wood by this time, but failed to heed the inward urge. The voice of the One God was speaking caution; but alas, O Minos, I heeded Him not!

"Some beast," said I. "Go on."

"A beggar will come," repeated my father, "and whine:

"'A bead of electron, a bead of gold, a bead of ivory, or a bead of bronze for one who followed One and is lost!'"

"Then do you answer him: 'For one who followed One and is lost, I give thrice what is asked.'"

"Give then unto the beggar these three electron beads."

My father took from his wallet a bag of lambskin upon a loop of undyed silk; and he opened that lambskin bag and showed me three beads of electron.

"They are curious," said I. "There is a mark on each—a cross."

My father returned the beads to the sheepskin bag and hung the loop of silk round my neck and dropped the bag within my mailed jacket. And he said:

"Straightway the beggar will answer you: 'It is written: He that gives shall receive. Here is a scarlet scarab.'"

My eyes were still fixed with foreboding on the wood.

"He that delivers to you the scarlet scarab, you may trust," continued my father. "You will follow the beggar without fear."

"What is this scarlet scarab?" I asked.

"The amulet of the aged Princess Thermuthis," said my father, lowering his voice, "grand-aunt of the Princess Hathane, whom I would have you wed."

I bowed my head in thought, drawing waving lines in the sand with the toe of my mailed boot. "Would the Princess Thermuthis know where Moses is?" I asked.

My father laughed. "Thermuthis is that daughter of Pharaoh who is foster-mother of Moses, for she found him in his infancy in an ark of bulrushes by the Nile when she went down to bathe. And she took the infant Moses into the Double House, and the boy was raised and educated with the sons of the Pharaoh. But in these days, when the life of Moses is forfeit, you will not easily gain the ear of aged Thermuthis. Yet she will see him who brings her the scarlet scarab."

Again I fell to musing. "Hathane the Huntress," I said, not meaning to speak the name aloud. "I like the name"

"And verily you will love the maid," said my father, and laughed again. "Now may the One watch over you while we are absent the one from the other; and if by the Eternal Will we meet not again in this life, be a father to our people when you are king. And hark you—bring back the Princess! I would not have Hathane the Huntress wed in Ethiopia or in Babylon!"

And my father kissed me on the cheek. I turned on my heel to conceal my emotion, and went back slowly toward the galley *Minos-eye*.

As I went, I thought: "Those sounds in the wood! I should have searched! If we were overheard! Now, the Unknown God forbid that any man from Phaestos heard our words!"

I was greatly troubled; and turned about, and fared up into Ida, the mountain of Zeus' cave, to pray and to seek auspices for our voyage. Dim in the altar-smoke the sibyl, all in white, lifted to the goddess the living asp.

And thrice the seeress besought the goddess of the asp, and the goddess was silent. And the sibyl stretched up both arms, the serpent writhing around her white wrists, and cried shrilly to the goddess; and the goddess was silent.

Then the sibyl cast the serpent upon the stone floor and cried out to me in a loud voice:

"Why comes the Bronze Warrior to the Sibyl of the Asp adoring an Unknown God? You have worshiped the Sun: but the image of Him who made the Sun is secreted in your heart."

"Go down to Egypt: but turn not from the One God, nor let fear enter your heart. Seek you Moses and learn of him, if you would behold again the shining walls of Labyrinth."

"Let Myenides beware the temples of Ammon! The dark temples of Ptah!"

And the seeress writhed and fell, and lay motionless upon the stone floor of the cave of Zeus.



I passed forth from the cavern to the outer mountainside and fared back slowly to the shore of the sea and the great galley *Minos-eye*.

And there came aboard *Minos-eye* my twelve youths of Haggia who ever fare with me, whom the brave Agrestes captains, and among them Orestos of the nimble tongue, who speaks Egyptian; and three counselors from Minos. And the counselors were: dark-bearded Nases; Atenydes the Fox; and Parmedes from Phaestos Palace, who plotted my death.

Now, ere we sailed, as I stood by the gangplank, there came to me a youth in a white robe bordered with purple, and gave into my hand a disk of clay. And I read:

Look to yourself in Egypt, O Myenides! For the Eumenides have unleashed the Lord of Phaestos, who is for Egypt in a swift galley. You are now my scepter. Be wise in all things, and beware the priests of Ammon! Beware the priests of Ptah!

Minos.

I was troubled, for I held fresh in my heart the warning of the sibyl in the cave of Zeus. Agrestes, who stood by me, cried:

"What says the disk?"

I gave it to him, saying:

"We have naught to fear in Egypt, save Ammon and save Ptah!"

And I went down to my cabin and drank red wine of Ionia; and the cabin was heavy with my gloom.

Now this chamber in the heart of the galley *Minos-eye* was of beauty such as only the gods create. It was painted and frescoed and furnished for the King of Kings himself, should he choose to sail upon her. Therefore that chamber of the sea-house was known as "The Royal House," and was finished by that same master who adorned the heart of the first *Minos-eye*. Upon those walls appeared gardens and shining lakes, birds and bright-winged insects, and golden and silver fish among green reeds. The ceiling also was painted blue like the sky, with fleecy clouds and winging birds, and setting in its glory of crimson, Ra's great disk of purest gold.

The Royal House was hung with rich embroidered cloths; and on its timbered floor lay painted rugs and the deep pelts of forest beasts. And there were huge jars of white stone, of the precious stone alabaster, and tall lamps of carved stone. Raised upon a dais was a chair like Egypt's throne, its base of gilded wood resting upon lions' backs; and each arm like unto a twisted asp ending in a woman's head. An eagle spread wings above the high back, whose eyes were carnelians, and rubies beyond price glowed crimson in the flashing wings. O Minos, for your ease this throne was

placed, to honor your greatness with its beauty. And I, the archon of Minos, dared sit in that seat!

I sat on the throne of Minos and sipped red wine from a silver cyathus. A massy stand of alabaster bearing an alabaster bowl stood near a carven table of cedar-wood and ivory. In the wide salver of the lamp, a broad wick floated on green oil and cast mellow light over the glowing colors of the Royal House.



And even as of old to you, O Minos, came your captain Deukos, who taught me swordplay in my youth, to me seated in your chair of state came the captain of my guard Agrestes of Haggia.

"Cups are on the table, and a ewer of wine, O Agrestes," said I. "Drink."

"All the merchandise is stowed away, and we are eastward bound," said Agrestes, lifting a cup of electron and brimming it with the wine.

"Aye," said I moodily, "and we took aboard evil, ere the red bulls' heads upon our sails were taut in the breeze. All's well on deck?"

"You should have stayed above to see our sailing," said Agrestes, quaffing his wine. "A fair sight is a great ship keeling in a favoring wind! All along our cypress bulwarks stand our tall double-circle shields. The long sweeps tug mightily at the curdling green waters of Pontus; and the halyards sing. Under the prow, forked and lofty, the cutwater hisses from our speed.

"Go on deck, my Prince! The breath of the ship is sweet with tang of sea-mist and spice of tarry ropes. And just as I was turning to come below, a dolphin, symbol of our seastate, gamboled abeam—a noble omen for which I thank Aphrodite born of sea-foam. A dolphin, O Myenides!"

"You are more poet than warrior, this day," said I to the captain of my guard.

"You have learned of Egypt from your father Phrasys," said Agrestes, a question in his voice.

"My father dwelt in the Double House of the Good God—for so in Egypt they call the Pharaoh," I said.

"The Double House?" repeated Agrestes.

"The royal palace," said I. "And my father became 'Friend of the Pharaoh,' for he received of him neck-pieces of jewels and gold, and arm-rings beyond price. And with the prince, Pharaoh's son, my father studied in the City of the Sun, in the temple of On; and later, when the Pharaoh abandoned Ammon and Ptah and built his new city Horizon-of-the-Sun's-Disk to the One God, my father went there with the royal of blood and learned the doctrine of the One God."

"The god Ra-Harmachis," said Agrestes.

"A barbarian name," said I. "I call Him the *Unknown God*. So it was that my father has taught me Egyptian and the secrets of the *Mysterious Books*. Aye, Agrestes, and magic too of the dark temples. Magic, too."

"In the Arena, just now," remarked Agrestes, "you tried no magic on the King of Phaestos—"

"Had I need of magic?" I asked. "But this magic is for children: to change a staff into a serpent, water into blood or wine as you wish—that makes a day's wonder for the crowd. It's small matter—"

"We voyage fast deathward," said Agrestes with a sigh. "There is peril ahead."

"And peril on this galley," I replied. "Agrestes, name you the counselors wise Minos has sent with us to Thebes."

"You saw them come aboard, Lord Prince," said Agrestes. "What madness is in Minos, to name a counselor from double-dealing Phaestos!"

"Phaestos grows too strong," said I, nodding my head.

"Should the Lord of Phaestos die," suggested Agrestes, "Minos will make you King of Phaestos."

"And cut off the son of Phaestos," I answered harshly. "Say no more of that—the King of Phaestos knows it all too well—and the King lives. Have I not done harm enough? The King of Phaestos fares to Egypt, to seek to wreck my embassy. And his friend, master of the South Palace, the Lord Parmedes, is one of my counselors and goes with me to Amen-hotep's Palace. We will step warily, my friend, when we tread the streets of Thebes."

"My Lord Prince has the wisdom of his grandfather Nestor," declared Agrestes with a smile. "Greater

your glory, when you return triumphant with a fleet of Egypt—"

"I have but one face," said I, "and my speech is plain. Call the three counselors here."

"What would you do?" protested Agrestes in alarm.

"Scotch a snake before it can strike," said I. "If I hold some wisdom from my grandfather Nestor, I know well when my youth is on trial. For what reason, think you, brave captain, has Minos set among us this traitor Parmedes?"

"Minos would see what you will do, and—" began Agrestes.

"He shall see what I will do!" I cried, straightening in the throne-seat and striking the cedarn table with clenched fist. "Call the counselors."

The round-bottomed cup of Agrestes rolled upon the table, spilling what was left of its wine over the edge upon the bearskin rug at his feet. He rose and bowed and left the chamber.

The three counselors of Minos stood presently before me: dark-bearded Nases, the fox Atenydes, and the treacherous Parmedes.

"You are my counselors," said I, drawing my bronze sword and laying it naked upon the table before me. "But Minos has been overgenerous with his embassy: I have no need of three."

Parmedes stepped one pace nearer the dais. "We were named by Minos, lord of kings and of the wide Mid Seal!" he cried.

"I am master of the trading and master of the ship," said I. "I am ambassador from the court of Crete to the Double House at Thebes. I am lord of the lives of all men on this galley: lord of the lives of the heroes of my crew, the soldiers of my guard—aye, and lord of the lives of the royal counselors."

"You dare not—" choked Parmedes, growing pale.

"Dare not?" I asked gently, rising and touching the bronze sword before me. "Dare not? I know not those words, Parmedes. I dared meet the King of Phaestos in the Arena with keen swords; I dared strike him to the yellow sands with straight arm of Greek boxers. If I fear not the King of Phaestos, think you I quail before his minion?"

"Consider well what you do—" began Parmedes again.

"A wise man considers well what he shall do, weighs with care the words he shall speak, before he enters upon any great undertaking. He will balance the known good against the known evil—"

"Evil?" cried Parmedes. "This is the King's ship!"

"I have balanced the two counselors against you, Parmedes," said I. "Surely we need no deep philosophy to know that two men weigh more than one. Of what need have I, then, of three counselors?"

"This is a fateful embassy," said Parmedes hoarsely. "And you are young—"

"Have either of the other two counselors aught to say?" I asked.

"This is your business," said Nases. "The judgment shall be yours."

"He who is wise in battle will guard his face," said the Fox.

"The embassy must and shall succeed!" I cried. "Wisdom makes clear that the mind of one man—and that, of a youth as the Lord of Phaestos said truly—should be made richer by the wisdom of counselors. But shall I, who voyage to Thebes as Minos' voice—shall I listen to the counsel of one who has evil toward me in his heart? Aye, Parmedes, and even death in his thought for the Embassy of Minos? That would be worse than folly; that would be madness. And believe me, counselors, I who as Bronze Warrior have defended well the wide coasts of Crete—I am sane."

"Do you threaten me?" exclaimed the lord of the Phaestos Palace.

"I will not enter the court of Tut-ankh-Ammon with a single follower whom I do not trust," said I. "Am I not from the altars of Geia and Zeus, and is not the Pharaoh high-priest of Ammon? By the gods, what mind will the plotting priests of Ammon have for the Cretan who comes with garments still smoky from the altar-fires of Zeus? And behold, one of my three counselors is of Phaestos, whose king is a hierophant of Ammon's, and has built an altar to the Egyptian god in the great South Palace! Shall this man stand before Pharaoh at my side, when the hour is heavy with the hopes of Crete, and the destiny of Labyrinth is put to the proof?"

"Would you slay me?" gasped Parmedes.

"But now in the Arena I spared the life of your King," I answered him. "Would I spare the King and slay the subject? Your life is safe in my keeping till you have forfeited the right to live. For the present, Parmedes, you shall live."

"But your freedom, Parmedes! From this hour, your freedom ends till once again we ride anchor in the fairway off the Cretan shore."

"Guards! Fetters for the counselor Parmedes! Place him in the strong chamber; see that he is well served; but guard him by day and by night on peril of your lives. Away with him!"

And I turned to Nases and Atenydes.

"I have faith in you two," I told him. "Our three minds shall make one mind, to bend to our desires the will of the Pharaoh. When I need counsel, I will call for you."

And the two counselors bowed and passed out; but Nases as he passed said:

"There be more wisdom in this young prince than one would find in a city of philosophers!"

Agrestes said to me: "Well done. I will breathe freer, now—at least till we tie up to the port of Thebes."

"You will tie up to the port of Thebes," said I. "I will not be with you."

"You—not on the galley!" exclaimed Agrestes in dismay. "Where, Lord Prince—"

"When I enter Thebes," I said, "I will enter alone."

CHAPTER THREE



THE ships of Minos can make the mouth of the Nile in five days. But we sail not from Crete in a straight line thitherward, but put in at Afric ports; and though the new galley *Minos-eye* stepped three masts upon her stout decks and we were aided by two hundred great sweeps, it was six days before we sighted the low and wooded marshlands that lie off the entrance into Egypt.

We tarried on our way twenty-four hours in an Afric haven, where I bought a small slant-sailed craft and had her lashed amidships upon the deck of *Minos-eye*. And I stored her with foods and water and wine, and I put into her hold a few palace jars of beauty, and sundry chains of amber and chains of gold, and a dozen great hides, and some ingots of tin and ingots of bronze.

So we entered the land of the delta, realm of the awful snake goddess Uad't; but of these swamps, the native god is Sutech. Here we anchored in a little bight of the land. There was a reed-boat near the farther shore, and in her were wild-haired men clad in garments woven of rushes. And the men were snaring birds.

Agrestes, who stood by me at the bulwarks, as we lay at anchor in the bight, pointed them out.

"Your father in his wisdom taught you of Egypt," said Agrestes in surprise. "Is not Egypt queen of civilized man? But yonder men of the matted hair half naked in their rush-clothes, can these be Egyptians?"

"Egypt does little with this marshy wilderness," said I, "though there is some temple here, now neglected. These be no Egyptians, but bird-snarers, fishermen, shepherds, savage men whom Egyptians call the Sochete, or People of the Swamps. See that the sea-warriors are alert this night, lest the Sochete board us and burn us. Now we shall presently approach the citadel White Wall, the ancient capital Mennufer.* The pyramids are there, and the smaller tombs of the old lords. Before we reach the White Wall, we will tie up to the riverbank and set my little vessel in the stream."

"I will go with you," asserted Agrestes, obstinate still. "From the moment the trading boat is in the river," said I, "I am only a sea-trader. The Bronze Warrior is not with you; you have no knowledge of him. You will give me Orestos of the nimble tongue, who speaks Egyptian like one in Egypt born, and six chosen heroes of my guard, who will sail this craft and defend it, if danger threaten."

"You are taller than the men of Egypt," said Agrestes. "You have a royal air. Men will know that you are no mere sea-trader."

"I am a Cretan," said I, "come hither from the Green Sea, from the far isles. I will play the part. I have a costume ready—"

"But the good bronze armor!" cried Agrestes in alarm. "A treacherous sword pierces all disguises—and you alone."

"In Egypt," said I, "there is an ancient wisdom: 'If thou art good,' the old philosopher Ptah-hetep said, 'thou shalt be regarded; and in company or in solitude, thou findest thy helpers, and they do thy commands.' And I will wear bronze under the linen."

"You speak like your father," said Agrestes. "He is ever quoting proverbs of Egypt. And I also remember one of them: 'Go not among the multitude,' the King of Haggia has quoted to me, '—go not among the multitude lest thy name be fouled.' And you plan to enter great Thebes—alone!"

"In Egypt," I answered him, "men believe that when they stand before Osiris the judge, if their souls can cry out truly, 'I have not been weak!' and the weigher of hearts finds that is true, they will enter the Happy Fields. I will reach my goal and do Minos' errand, for old Ptah-hetep has promised: 'If thou goest in the straight road, thou shalt reach the intended place.'"

Agrestes sighed. "You know more of Egypt than I," he said. "But, O Myenides, I fear for you!"

"Let Phaestos fear," said I, "for I shall learn where he lurks and strike him down: and that, not to win his crown, but to make safe my life."

That night, as we lay in the swamp, a loud outcry upon the deck awoke me. And I snatched up a linen robe, and my belt with sword and sheath, and rushed upward, buckling the leather around me. Agrestes met me at the companion-head.

"O Myenides!" he cried. "The Lord Parmedes has slain his guard and escaped! He called for water; and when the guard passed him the bowl, Parmedes smote the fellow on the head, freed himself of the shackles, and reached the deck."

"Clear away the boats!" I shouted. "Come! Bid the guard follow!"

"A bootless effort," answered Agrestes with a groan. "Parmedes plunged into the sea. We shot a flight of arrows at his wake in the moonlight, but he made off clear of them. He landed in the marsh and vanished among the trees."

"Now, Zeus guard us!" I exclaimed. "For who knows what the traitor may have learned of our plans!"

"Give up your mad voyage alone," urged Agrestes. "Death's loosed against you on the Nile."



Etching by Yngve E. Soderberg

I seized him by the shoulder.

"What Egyptian death can scathe me?" I whispered in his ear. "I worship the Unknown God. He is greater than animal gods: the pack will fly yelping before Him!"

"Does your god rule in Egypt?" demanded Agrestes, groaning. "Here, Ammon and Ptah are great; lesser gods, without number; and the priests of their foul altars, a multitude; and every priest against you with magic—and with sword."

"I will feast with Pharaoh," I assured Agrestes, "and I will come out of Egypt with an Egyptian fleet. Aye, and I may come forth out of Egypt with Pharaoh's daughter as my bride. Hunting in Egypt is good sport, no doubt—but we have birds to shoot in Crete."

"Ha! You have heard tales of the loveliness of Hathane the Huntress!" cried Agrestes, and laughed. "But men say she is for the bed of Babylon. Who are you, to wed the daughter of Pharaoh?"

"I am the Bronze Warrior," said I, "and I return to the Royal House to sleep. Do you likewise, Agrestes, and leave the marrying of Hathane the Huntress to me."

CHAPTER FOUR



WE took in anchor, on the day following the escape of the Phaestian lord, spread our sails to a favoring breeze, and stood away for the west branch of the Nile. The sun just showed a golden rim over the tops of the marsh trees. The wild birds were squawking with loud noise where they fed on the banks. And we moved swiftly toward the White Wall.

*Memphis.



*Illustrated by John
Richard Flanagan*

When I judged we had sailed half the distance to the ancient capital, I directed the helmsman to steer us for the eastern shore. There we anchored, and set over the small craft. Orestos and the six men chosen from the guard, brave youths of Haggia, boarded her, and I was ready to be off.

I called Agrestes to the Royal House and gave into his hand a papyrus sheet.

"You are master of *Minos-eye* till we meet again at Thebes," I told him. "Here is your royal grant, giving right to ships of Crete to tie up at the ports of Egypt and Cretans here to trade. You will show it to the harbor-master."

"And you—" he demanded anxiously.

"Sail to the city of On," said I. "It will be a six or seven hours' row with the sweeps beyond the White Wall. Pharaoh's grant will give you right to put in at On. Tarry there for two days. Then press on with all speed to Thebes."

"Let no man board you but the master of the docks. There will be spies of the priesthood and of the King of Phaestos to guard against. This is galley of Minos: by the old treaty, not yet expired, it has right to be here, nor does the galley concern the soldiers of Tut-an-kh-Ammon."

"Fear not for me. I go to spy out the land, to learn what is stirring against us, ere I go to the Palace of Amen-hotep and deliver Minos' letter into the Pharaoh's hand. And there is also the secret mission, of which you know—"

"You would seek out the Prince Moses—" began Agrestes.

"The Egyptians hold the nation of Moses in slavery," said I. "It is now many years since Moses was found by Pharaoh's daughter in the bulrush ark. Now my father tells me that this Princess of Egypt still lives, though very old: and she will know where I can find the Prince Moses."

"I have heard something of these matters," said Agrestes, "and that this Moses is indeed the Nestor of his race, and that the Hebrews fret under the Pharaoh's heavy hand."

"Moses will deliver his people," said I. "I think we come in the hour."

"Is it not enough that you have Phaestos against you, here, and Ammon and Ptah the gods of Thebes?" cried Agrestes. "Would you become known as friend of the Hebrews? Then indeed, the cause of the new treaty is lost! And you, in this great city of Thebes, will be lost also—and I shall perforce sail back to Haggia to tell the King he is sonless, and to report to Minos that the South Palace is grown stronger than Labyrinth!"

"There is an Unknown God, the One God," said I. "And this wise man Moses worships Him. How then shall I fail, in the shadow of His wings? It will weaken Egypt to lose this subject-race: and will not the friendship of Minos be important in that time to the Pharaoh? I too, O Agrestes, worship the Unknown God."

"You bow down to the altar of Zeus," said Agrestes. "You seek divinations of the Sibyl of the Asp—"

"Look you, Agrestes: by what name is the god of the Hebrew called by Moses?"

"Jehovah Yawc, as I have heard."

"Jehovah is another name for Yawc," said I, "and Yawc is Osiris, and Osiris is Zeus: the truth is like a pool of water mirroring stars, which these barbarians roil with their wild imaginings! But surely the Unknown God is too great to care by what name He is known of men: only these foul rites in Egypt's temples must offend Him. In the temple of Zeus, I still worship the One God in my heart; and from the Sibyl of the Asp I hoped to receive divine guidance—and that, I did. She cried out to me, when the goddess was silent, not with the voice of the Asp, but with the voice of the Living God."

Agrestes gripped my arm. "Go, then, my Lord Prince," said he. "But when you come into Thebes, send word to me. For we have been like brothers all our lives—and I fear for the Bronze Warrior. I fear—"

"Never for yourself, Agrestes," I interrupted him, "but ever for your friend. Be of strong heart. I will see you in Thebes. Farewell."

I strode up the steps and out on deck, and was swiftly out of the great war-galley and in the little vessel. And we stood away, and sailed slowly up the mighty Nile.

As we sailed, there came out to us from the west shore a long black galley rowed by twenty sweeps. It bore on its high bow and stern figures of gilded hawks. And it came in close to us, and a high voice called:

"Ho, you of the river-boat! Carry you a messenger from the altar of Hapi?"

Now, Hapi is a god of the bull; and a bull is the symbol of Minos. He who hailed me was gowned in white linen like a priest, and wore a high, rounded headpiece. But I knew that voice and was silent.

And the images upon his bow and stern were hawks of the god Horakhti, Ra of the Sun Rising, whose priests and worshipers also of Ammon, or Ammon-Ra.

"Turn your head, Myenides!" cried the voice. "And I will give you counsel!"

I reached and took from one of my guards his bow and a broad arrow; and I fitted the arrow to the string. But he in the boat of the Hawk-god rose up, a long bow of Egypt in his hand, and released the cord. But a sudden squall swung our bow, and the arrow cut through the cloth above my breast and thudded into the deck at my side: lo, the arrow by a finger's breadth missed my heart!

And I released the bowstring, in my turn; and my bolt missed its mark also and passed through the chest of the helmsman. Then the tiller sprang from the dying hand, and the boat went wild, and oars crashed with oars.

The stream took the hawk-boat, and they passed from us. So Parmedes of Phaestos again escaped me—and he was free on the Nile and knew my vessel and my plans. The hawk-boat must have passed us that night, for soon I was to learn that Parmedes was in Thebes.

I passed by the White Wall of Mennufer, and I passed by the holy city of On. And in due time my eyes beheld the glory of Thebes.

Aye, great Minos: the city of a hundred gates, the world's wonder Thebes, thrice holy city of the gods, rose from the timeless banks of the Nile: with on the one hand the mighty mass of masonry of the city proper, and on the other the awful city of the dead, columned temples splendid beyond words, the lakes and courts and palaces of nobles and of Pharaohs—mighty palaces with ivory all agleam and blazing with gold.

Minos, I saw Thebes, holy of Ptah, after its abandonment risen to new splendor, and now seat of Tut-ankh-Ammon, the dark, dwarfish, satirical, cruel Pharaoh who began his rule so gently and so gayly, worshiping then indeed the Unknown God, but who soon turned his heart to Ammon and waxed sour and baleful. This Tut-ankh-Ammon is most luxurious of world's kings, wearing upon his hands gloves to keep them soft: he who alone in the magnificence of his court, except for kings, can wear coverings for his feet! Even a prince, as I heard tell, was compelled to approach him barefoot.

YEA, TUT-ANKH-AMMON, WHO USED the nation of Hebrews to make him richer and greater, but whose increased cruelties to the race of slaves lost to Egypt the services of that nation. Tut-ankh-Ammon, whose scorn and defiance of Jehovah lost him an army—and who himself came near to perishing in the rage of waters when the God loosed the mighty walls of the Red Sea he had heaped up, upon the narrow lane of Israel's passing—and drowned the Egyptian host! Verily, the Pharaoh would also there have perished, had I not drawn him forth. Would the One God, think you, smite Moses' friend? Yet this Pharaoh has paid for his evil: he sleeps eternally in the rock of the dread Valley of the Dead Kings.

Little good to a dead King of Kings, O Minos, are the riches of Tut-ankh-Ammon's Chamber of Death! The chariot wheels are still; the boxes of treasure unseen of men; the rich foods preserved forever only for the teeth of time to munch, and for those who come, after Egypt's fall, to gaze upon in a brief day's marveling.

We sailed all that night, and reached Thebes in the sudden dawn. The wind had died, just after we tied up to a little pier among humble craft—fishing boats and carriers of freight.

This pier was at the outer edge of the great city, in that place sometimes called End of the City, on the eastern bank of the Nile. Above us the city rose, mass upon mass, hovels and palaces, squalor and riches—with little crooked streets, many too narrow for a camel to pass; and below us lay masses of rubble, mounds of mud where once had stood houses of sunburned brick, stone ruins, fallen pillars, among which here and there rose a low, mean house with walls of mud. This part of Thebes had clearly been victim of a great flood of the Nile and had never been rebuilt. But near the little pier stood an ugly, squat, one-story house of mud by the river's brink.

I marked that the foundations of the little house of mud were of stone, and that the stone was carried above the high-water line of the river; but above the stone, the house was built of bricks of mud and straw baked in the sun such as Israelite slaves make for Egypt. And before the house of mud was a landing for boats; and opening upon it, a small square door. There was but one window in the river-wall of the small house, and that little and square, high up near the roof.

On the pier to which we were moored, an ancient one sat, his back to a post, half asleep in the patch of shadow. The nimble-tongued Orestos, who stood by me, called to the old man:

"Ho, Father Nile, awake! A few pearls of wisdom, I beseech you, if the heat of the morning has left you power to speak."

The old man stirred in his rags and answered sleepily: "I have lived long; I know much. What would you ask?"

"Yonder squat, rude house of mud fascinates. Has it a story?"

"The house—the house of mud," mumbled the old man. "Yea, yea. Look about you: yonder is desolation, and in the expanse of time all Thebes shall be a shattered column and a heap of mud, a heap of mud."

"But the story, ancient man!"

"The house of mud stands only because it was built upon rock," said the old man. "Before the great flood, in the rule of the last Amenhotep, there was a palace just beyond, of which the house of mud was an outbuilding. Look for the palace, stranger! You will find only broken columns, a bit of crumbling wall, a heap of mud—a heap of mud."

"The story, now, the story!"

"Before the great flood, there lived in the mud house a dwarfish and ugly being: like a frog in ugliness, like a frog. So she was known of men as Hekt; Hekt, the frog-goddess, as you may not know, O stranger. Hekt became a mistress over the Hebrew slaves. She shook an evil rod. She beat the Hebrews. I knew Hekt—I knew Hekt, the cruel beater of slaves. But Hekt beat one too many—and Sokar rose from his place of bones, Sokar rose in his tarry robes, Sokar the death-god visited Hekt—and Hekt was not."

"Ah," said Orestos. "I remember—Hekt is the goddess of birth. How died this cruel Hekt?"

"Wielding her rod," said the ancient, "beating to death a slave among the Jews, wielding her rod. For, as the mistress plied the rod to the torn flesh, all lathered in blood, the Prince Moses leaped upon her and smashed her head with a rock and buried the body of Hekt in the sand. And Moses fled out of Egypt. But Moses is come again; he has returned: he will lead his people forth."

"The house is worthy of its mistress," said Orestos, staring at the grim house of mud.

"So, stranger, yonder mud-house has been empty and cursed unto this day, even among the Egyptians; and it is known as the House of Hekt, the House of Hekt. But all things pass, O man of the Red Lands*! Egypt is old; her cities, dust; a heap of dry mud, a heap of dry mud." And he fell asleep.

"An oracle spoke through him," said Orestos. "He has crumbled Egypt. Egypt is become dust."

ALL THAT DAY I LAY BELOW DECKS because of the heat, impatient for darkness.

Then with a swoop came the night after a brief blaze of sunset. And I rose and went forth into Thebes, clad as a poor merchant, entering the city by a side-gate, and through swarms of chariots and horses that at every gate are eternally on guard.

The streets were dark, and the houses, raised above the paved way on little flat hills, were many of them of two and three stories, and loomed over me blackly. So I came to a small square, bright in moonlight.

As I stood looking into that empty square, a hoarse voice came out of the night:

"O Frog of Birth, Hekt!" it rasped. "Who was born in the land of the Bull? O ibis Tahuti, who passed through your swamps? O crocodile-god Sebek, who has spurned your bank with a foreign keel? O Taurt of the river-horse, who stirs your tall reeds? O jackal Anpu, who defiles your altar fires with smell of the smoke of Zeus? O Bast, you lion-god! Who comes into Egypt hating Ammon and Ptah?"

And on the opposite side came an answering voice: "The hawk Horakhti has seen him! The hare Unnefer flees from his path! Now, woe to Selk, the scor-

*Foreign countries.

pion-god! Your head is under his mailed heel! Woe to Osiris and Horus and Isis! Woe to Apis! The stranger has come! Woe to Apis! Your foe slinks in Thebes!"

And a third voice rang in the night, clear as a bell: "What shall the gods do to him who hates the gods?"

"Come forth out of the night, worshippers of Ammon!" cried the first voice. "Slay him with stone knives of priests ere he reaches the Good God, ere he poisons the ears of Tut-ankh-Ammon!"

And then from all sides rose the wild chant:

"Cut him down, Ammon! Cut him down, Ptah! Destroy him! Destroy him!"

I loosed my sword, swinging in its jeweled sheath under my merchant robes. And I set my back against a high wall and waited.

One came from a side street bearing a torch, and held it high. Then with a rush they came. And my sword leaped from its sheath and flashed in the moonlight.

They closed in upon me with knives of stone as for a sacrifice. And one reached through my guard and struck savagely against my linen robe. The stone knife pierced the cloth and shattered against the good bronze mail.

And I, shouting for the night-guards, cut him down. Aye, my good bronze blade flashed fire in the light of the Theban moon! Then there was a running, and the wards of the streets appeared, bearing torches. The priests fled away, leaving two dead men sprawled in the court.

"What goes here?" cried the captain of the watch. "Who are you?"

"A poor merchant from Crete," said I, "come forth to walk in the night, for the night is hot. And thieves fell upon me with knives."

The captain held his smoking torch low, revealing the broken stone knife and the two dead priests.

"But this is a priest-knife!" he cried. "And these are priests!"

"Do the priests of Egypt turn thieves in the dark?" I demanded angrily. "I will complain to the One* of this thing. It gives evil odor to my first night in Thebes! The One shall hear it."

"Nay—you are unharmed," said the captain of the watch hastily. "Who knows what the priests may do, what their purpose is! Best let the matter lie: for you and for me. The priests grow too strong for us. I think, stranger, they like you not. Watch lest the cup be poisoned, now the sacrifice-knife is broken. He is twice armed who is once warned."

And without further questioning, they picked up the bodies of the dead priests and disappeared into the heart of Thebes. I could hear the thudding of their steps and see the yellow flares of their torches a long way down that narrow lane. But I returned to my river-boat, O Minos, unharmed.

CHAPTER FIVE



IN the day following the attack upon me by the priests, I went up into Thebes again in the broad light. I took with me a peeled stick of olive wood. And when I had found the square of the sellers of wine, I sought out the ancient palace and the pillar of stone, and sat down as if weary, with my back to the pillar and the peeled staff of olive wood across my knees.

Near me stood a man all naked save for a loin-cloth of cotton striped red and black. His hair was matted, and his eyes were nearly closed with the sores of the desert. He held in his bony hand a necklace

of amber, a lovely thing and ancient, and cried in a loud voice:

"Come barter with Impara for the amber treasure! What will you give for an amber chain fit to grace the neck of a queen? Come barter! Come barter!"

A tall man came up, clad in rags, with a yellow cloth wound round his head, and said in a rough voice:

"Ho, Impara! What shadowy figure is that, standing with reaching arm at your back?"

Impara looked nervously over his shoulder and answered:

"There is no one at my back but the man from the Red Lands resting against the pillar."

"Ho, Impara!" said the other, coming nearer. "The figure is thin and the face is dry, and the body wound fold on fold with tarry cloth. Behold, on his head the double-crown: the red and the white, and in the dead hand the ankh of life."

IMPARA BEGAN TO SHAKE. He cast upon the ground the beauty of amber and fled. And the tall one in evil-smelling rags pounced and picked up the amber necklace. He tucked it within the folds of his garments and grimaced.

"He has looked too closely into the face of Thothmes," he said. "He has robbed the Ba, and the curse of the Ba is upon him."

"But you, O jester," said I, calmly staring up at him, "have robbed the thief and so become a thief. Upon you also shall be the curse of the Ba."

The ragged man leered.

"The very presence of Thothmes living would have caused these bones to crack," said he. "But who should fear old Thothmes dead? That one who flees yonder broke the good tooled stones and tunneled into the sacred chamber, and now peddles his pelf in Thebes. And I say to you, stranger, if Pharaoh's men hear of it, it were better the looter of tombs had died before he was born."

"But I am all innocent of stealing from the dead. I am as honest a thief as you will find in all Egypt, and rob only the living. Give me a sound bronze knife, and the amber of Thothmes is yours."

"I am a merchant," said I. "I traffic not with thieves."

"Ho, men of Thebes!" shouted the rascal, as he continued on his way, "an honest trader is here, a man from the Red Lands whose heart is ready for Osiris' scales! An honest trader in Thebes! Ho! Ho!"

"You, a trader—and pass the chance to get so cheaply the fair necklace of amber?" exclaimed a soft voice near me. "It is worth ten chains of gold!"

I answered mechanically, for I watched for the beggar: "I sell palace jars and precious amber, lady; but I trade only in honest wares."

"Not even if a princess asks?" said the voice.

The words fell upon these ears gently and softly. I felt a strange quiver in my breast. I turned my head.

Close by me was a litter of gilded wood borne by four Nubian slaves sweating in the hot day. Two fan-bearers stood by, and a guard of six Egyptian swordsmen, clearly chosen for their strength, with round shields of shining brass and ribboned spears. And I knew by the ostrich plumes at the corners of the golden chair that this must be the litter of a lady from the Double House.

The purple hangings of the chair were sewn with great blue gems that glimmered like blue waters in light; and the curtains were parted by a small white hand, itself a jewel too rare for even a king to touch. Dark eyes peered out at me, that set my heart afire. I rose so quickly, I dropped my olive staff.

"O Princess!" I cried, raising both arms in salutation above my head. "I heard no step—"

There was the tinkle of a laugh behind the purple hangings. They parted more—and I saw her face.

*That is, the Pharaoh.

O Minos! You beheld the loveliness of Ariadne in the golden brightness of her room. You once saw the face of Helen above the field of Troy! But you have not looked on Hathane of Egypt as have I!

"You have dropped your staff—your peeled staff. Of olive wood, is it not? *Of olive wood.* Who then are you, tall stranger?"

"A poor sea-trader," I answered her.

"You come from far lands," said she. "But you salute me as one familiar with the courts of kings."

"A sea-trader travels far and sees much," said I.

"A peeled olive-staff—" she mused. And she made a lovely little motion with her lips, exposing teeth white as the water-lilies on Labyrinth pool. "A peeled olive-staff in Thebes? You are bold, O Cretan!"

"Why think you I come from Crete?" I asked.

"When I was little—long ago, I had a friend, a tall stranger, guest in the Double House, Friend of the Pharaoh. He loved me well. He was wont to peel olive staffs for me, as yours is peeled, in that lovely city now dust, Horizon-of-the-Sun's-Disk. Do you know what he told me, man from Crete?"

I could only shake my head.

"He whispered his secret in these ears," she said, and bending out from her litter, whispered: "He worshiped the Unknown One, and the peeled rod was symbol of his God."

"At that time, it was no secret," said I hoarsely. "Even he who is Pharaoh, your brother, worshiped the Unknown God in the city that is dead. This is Thebes. Already, stone knives of Ammon have sought to drain this body of its last ruddy drop. You speak dangerously—and to a stranger, O Daughter of Pharaoh!"

"You live dangerously, O man from Crete, O humble trader of the sea."

"Do you remember your friend's name?" I asked.

"How could I forget? He was Phrasys, King of Haggia upon Crete, and my father's friend and mine."

My lips trembled, and I felt the blood in my cheeks.

"When I am come home again," said I, "I will seek out this King Phrasys, and I will tell him of our meeting and of your sweet remembering. Will you name yourself to a humble trader, that he may name you to a king?"

"A fair trade is just," said she. "I have not asked your name—yet."

"You are Hathane, Princess of Egypt," I answered for her. "And I will see you again."

"I will surely see you again," said she, "and in the Double House!" She looked into my eyes—a long, searching look. "I have seen your face before," she said, "or one as like it as a—say, a *father's to a son's.*"

The curtains fell into place. A sweet voice gave a quick command. The four Nubians lifted their long poles; the fan-bearers waved their high plumed fans; the guards began to march, bearing proudly their shining shields and tall ribboned spears. And so passed from my sight all loveliness in Egypt—for a little time: Hathane the Huntress, sister of Tut-anekh-Ammon.

AND I WAS SO SUNKEN IN DEEP THOUGHT, I failed at first to hear the beggar's whine:

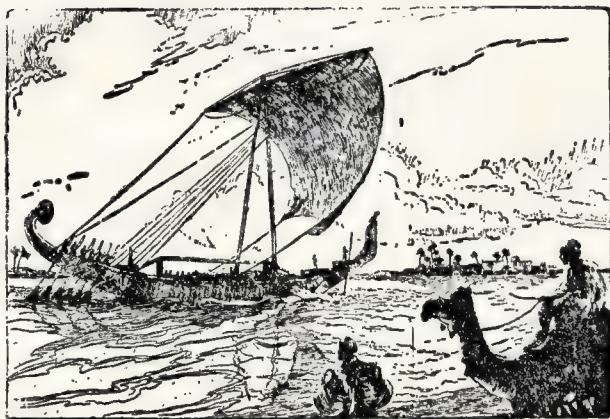
"A bead of electrum, a bead of gold, a bead of ivory, or a bead of bronze for one who followed One and is lost!"

And I answered then: "For the one who followed One and is lost, I give thrice that which is asked."

I lifted from under my breastplates the lambskin bag my father had given me by the sea, and opened it, and gave into the soiled hand of the beggar the three cross marked beads.

The beggar said: "It is written: He that gives shall receive. Here is a scarlet scarab."

He gave me an ivory scarab dyed scarlet; and looking anywhere but in my eyes, he said:



"The stranger in the city needs a guide. Follow me." Should I trust this shifty-eyed wretch with my life? I hesitated, fingering the hilt of my bronze blade.

"Come!" he insisted. "You were bid to follow a beggar. You are not too proud?"

I laughed. "Lead on," I ordered. "But beware of tricks, for my sword is keen."

"I brought you the scarlet scarab," he said, as if that should answer all my doubts.

Yet a strange uneasiness possessed me. I looked this way and that as we went. We came to a wide street. And two men with shaven heads, bearing staffs in their hands, came shouting:

"Way for Ptah in the image of Apis! Way for the Good God* divine son of Ammon! Way for the Holy bull!"

There shrilled the sounds of lutes. Soldiers with long spears appeared, and held us back with the shafts. Dancing girls from the temples came naked, playing their lutes. There was a chanting of priests.

Down the center of the way came the Pharaoh Tut-anekh-Ammon. He bore upon his head the double crowns, the red and the white, upon a great wig, and a false beard upon his chin, an insignia of his royalty. And despite that tall headpiece, I saw that Tut-anekh-Ammon was indeed a little man. His face looked sullen and hard. He had the long, hooked nose borne, as I have heard, by all the Pharaohs of this dynasty, and his chin was strong. He was dark, O Minos, but he trod at the procession-head like a king, and verily he looked a son of the gods.

The High Priest of the Temple followed him, clad in white robes and crimson sandals, with a priestly cap on his shaven head. And other shaven priests in white passed, and two maids in golden tissue, singing. And then came Apis the bull, emblem of Ptah: snow-white, with horns wreathed in garlands, and flowers upon his broad back, stalking on golden hooves. And there followed after a little, among several litters, the sedan chair of the Daughter of Pharaoh. But her curtains were down: the face of Hathane was shut off from me. And there came many chariots with prancing horses plumed and splendid; and other hordes of priests.

The music died in distance. Aye, that was my first sight of the Pharaoh Tut-anekh-Ammon. But the beggar was impatient. His voice whined, urging me on.

Thereafter we came to a part of the city lying by the river. At first it all seemed strange, so had we wound in and out the tortuous streets of Thebes. But I did note that it lay in that section of the capital End of the City, the wretched, almost abandoned quarter of which I have written, a place of desolation. Close by the Nile stood a low, flat-roofed structure, built square, with walls

*The Pharaoh.

sloping inward toward the roof. And here was a little narrow door through which the beggar led me.

The interior of this mud-brick house had but one window, and that a little square thing high up near the ceiling. The walls had been rudely painted with scenes showing a gilded chariot, a temple of the dead, and a crude drawing of some god: whether hawk or ibis, I could not tell. The interior was dark despite the day outside; and the light from the small window and from a lamp of clay whose smoke only made greater the obscurity.

JUST INSIDE THE DOOR, I STOPPED. I heard quick movements. In the light under the window, by the smoky lamp, two men in armor stood. And I cried out, and sought to draw my sword.

Strong arms from behind seized my wrists, and stout cords bound them. And the voice of the King of Phaestos smote upon my ears.

"Welcome, Myenides," he said.

"But the beggar!" I gasped, still too mazed for clear thought. "The wretch was false, then!"

"Nay," answered that treacherous lord. "The beggar was true. There lies your man. His soul is weighed already."

In the shadows under the painted wall lay a huddled body. A long spear pinned it to the floor in a pool of drying blood.

The King of Phaestos laughed. "I was in the wood by the little hollow," he boasted, "when your father out of his wisdom told you what to do in Thebes. I could not catch all he said, but the important things I heard. Of what use is the scarlet scarab? I know only it was to be delivered to you in exchange for the marked beads. And surely necklaces, which are like the grass-blades in number, are no commoner than are scarabs in Egypt! You will not satisfy my curiosity?"

I was silent.

"No matter," said the Lord of Phaestos. "Keep the scarab: I lay it so on Ammon's altar. Where you are bound, Bronze Warrior, there will be no use for earth-made scarabs, nor for earth-made bronze."

"The less Egyptian you, to think so, Phaestos," said I. "When the Pharaoh dies, all the trinkets Pharaoh loves will be laid in the tomb for him. Surely, a man's Ka or double-self needs the possessions of this life to solace him. Will not my Ka, when I lie in the tomb, joy in this scarlet scarab—even as I?"

"There is some mystery about this scarab," declared the one by Phaestos' side: and the voice was that of Parmedes. "All men know Myenides to be a warrior who cares nothing for baubles. And have you ever seen before an ivory scarab dyed scarlet?"

"No matter," said Phaestos. "What care we for a scarab? I have that within my power which I came to Egypt to get. And you would marry Hathane!"

I stirred and clenched my fists, that were held bound behind me.

"I learned of your father about the rod of olive wood, and of the three marked beads you carried in the lamb-skin bag. I had but to peel a wand and sit by the pillar in the Marketplace of the Wine-merchants, and wait for the beggar. When he came, we persuaded him to trudge this way. And here we released his three selves from body grown too old and worn to hold them. Ammon needed the beggar's life, and took it."

"Life is cheap in Ammon's hands," said I.

"I, whose counsel you scorned, Myenides," said the other, stepping forward and striking me in the face with the flat of his hand, "will report you to Minos. I counsel you now: make your peace with your Unknown God, for the known gods have you."

"Your tongue outspeeds your wits," said I. "I fear neither Ammon nor the priests of Ammon. You two

shall soon feed the jackal and the crocodile; for your gods are no better than the forms you clothe them in: foul monsters of evil dreams. I worship the Eternal, the Living God. Think you He who made the sun of Ra will fail to take me out of the Temple of Lies?"

"Your god must be far off in this hour, to let you be delivered into our hands," sneered Phaestos. "Mayhap he wanders with Moses in the wilderness, or is giving a feast to the Kha of Chu-m'-eten in the Valley of the Dead Kings."

"My foot has not slipped, but He has borne me up," said I. "When you threw me in the Arena of Labyrinth, I rose again—and it was you who tarried, O Lord of the jeweled boots, supine on the sands, when I went forth. And when this fellow by you sought to slay me with an arrow, a capful of wind shifted our boat, and the bolt missed me by a thumb's-breadth and plunged into the insensate boards. Even that animal herd from Ammon, set ravening in the night by you to cut me down, fled before the flame of my sword. The priestly knife was shattered, and two priests will never name Hathor or Horus again. My God lives."

"Let your god pit his powers then against the gods of Egypt," said Phaestos. "From the great temple on the west bank, let your god snatch you from Ammon's arms. Ha! An unknown god, is he? Then to you is his power unknown. I worship Ammon and Ptah. I defy your Hebrew Yawe."

"Before I have seen three nights come and go," said I, "before you feast in the Double House with Tut-ankh-Ammon, I will be free—and I will be the Pharaoh's guest at your feasting. But one of you two who shall see me at the King's table, sitting in honor as the ambassador from Crete—one of you, I say, will never walk thence alive. And as to you, O King of Phaestos! Before another new moon shines on Ti's lake, your body, riven and lifeless, shall feed the dogs of Thebes!"

"Parmedes," said Phaestos, "this dog from Labyrinth's stalls is mad. But I am a high priest—I will not pollute myself; I will not touch him. Let the priests of Ammon take him for sacrifice in the Temple of Karnak. I go to the Double House to sue for Hathane's hand."

With one convulsion of my arms I snapped the cords that bound me and surged forward. I struck Phaestos such a blow with clenched fist, he smashed back against the painted wall and fell, sprawling and senseless, upon the hard mud-floor.

They who stood behind me struck me down and bound me again, and gagged my mouth with noisome rags. They opened a place in the floor on the river-side, and took me from that place by shaky steps leading down to a black temple boat with the gilded hawk-heads on bow and stern, and a canopy, or naos, in the midst of her. And Osiris was painted there, and Isis the mother and Horus her son.

They cast me into the naos and dropped the white curtains; but one of these caught by a corner and held, so I could look forth upon the river. But the two Cretans had remained in the square house by the shore. And as we moved from under the shadow of that house, behold, it was the House of Hekt, and beyond it the little pier where lay my river-boat and the heroes.

AS I LAY WONDERING whether they might see the sailing of the temple-bark, my river-boat stirred and came to life: the triangular red sail unfurled; the mooring was cast off; the sail took the breeze. With sudden spurt, she slid past us so near that she almost fouled our oarsmen with her sweeps. And Orestos the Haggian was at the tiller, leaning over and scanning the temple craft.

For the moment, I thought they would board us. The priests knew not, of course, the craft was mine; but they were uneasy, and I heard a jingle of metal as they got ready their arms.

Abruptly my river-boat stood away and ran downstream past the temple landing till we had reached the steps; and then she put about and dropped the now useless sail. And my heroes of Haggia pulled heavily against the current of the Nile. But I, bound and gagged within the naos, could not signal them.

The priests waited at the temple landing for the river-boat to pass. But at this moment one of them saw that my curtains were open and drew them shut. Yet presently I heard the nose of my craft nuzzle the side of the temple-boat, and I knew that only the thin white velvet of the naos was between Orestos and me. And I heard his voice.

"You are priests of the Temple?" he asked.

How excellently he spoke Egyptian! When you have need of an envoy, O Minos, send forth Orestos: I commend him to Labyrinth for his courage, his resourcefulness, and his brains: an honorable man in whom there is no guile.

A surly voice answered Orestos: "Priests of Ammon on temple business, stranger."

"You came forth from the shadow of the house of mud-bricks," said Orestos. "A sordid place, half ruinous. What did priests of so rich a temple in place so mean?"

"We took thence a reviler of the gods," said the surly voice. "Surely, altars of Ammon are too holy for this one. I will ask that he be borne to the sanctuary of serpent-holding Ptah-Sokar, the pigmy god upon the crocodile's back. There he should die!"

"I have been told that the house of mud is known as the House of Hekt," said Orestos. "From the frog Hekt the goddess of birth to Sokar lord of death is the span of a man's life. Now, will not Hekt be angry that Ammon robs her to sacrifice to Sokar?"

"Hekt has no power to front Ammon god of oases," retorted the priest.

"Can Sokar give life?" exclaimed Orestos. "Nay, Sokar is the end of all; but Hekt is ruler of the beginning. You rob birth to give to death: so runs man's life. But is it for man to usurp the power of the gods? Let Hekt give sons to Egypt, and let Hekt keep her own: but feed not Sokar, lest Osiris be angry."

"Is Isis angry," cried the priest, "because the priests who shake the sistrum at her feasts place the rods-and-rings in Hathor's hand?"

"Therein lies no parallel," answered Orestos. "For though the jingling sistrum, as well as the cow, is Hathor's emblem, yet that silvery tumbrel pertains to Isis also—but only as the temple maidens play the lute in the procession of Apis: the sistrum is not the emblem of Isis, but her honor. Why, then, should Isis be angry at the rods-and-rings in Hathor's hand?"

"Is not Seb the Earth separated from Nut the Heavens by Shu the air?" demanded the surly priest. "Even so, Hekt and Sokar are a life's span apart: how then shall they meet to quarrel over the wretched one lying bound under the naos?"

"Be patient with me yet a little, O Priest of Ammon," said Orestos. "I would learn of Egypt: I am from the Red Lands. I have been told that once Sokar came to Hekt—but not that one who is goddess of birth—and that this other Hekt died. But you named the goddess Nut. Is not the goddess Nut ruler of the arrow?"

"You know much of our gods," said the priest. "Truth is in your mouth."

"If then Ammon shoots the arrow and Nut turns it aside, shall Ammon be angry?"

And I knew Orestos remembered that which befell me on the river from the bow of Parmedes. Did he know what I lay within? Was he speaking for my ears?

There was stillness on the deck. I heard the priest answer in puzzled tones: "Nay, stranger, for Ammon knows Nut is goddess of the arrow: it is hers to direct according to her wisdom. Ammon would not be angry."

"Good," said Orestos. "But this reviler of the gods lay in the House of Hekt the goddess of birth, for so you said; and birth is not the province of Sokar, lord of death. If Ammon intrudes and robs Hekt to please Sokar, will not the frog-goddess be angry?"

And I knew that Orestos purposed to anger the priest, for the priest's voice rose shrilly: "Go your way, O Stranger! This is a boat of the Temple, and about the god's business. He who lies within comes into Egypt to awaken a god that sleeps, a god that brought ruin to Thebes and emptied the Temple of Ammon."

And now I knew Orestos had learned that for which so cleverly he sought.

"May Herakhti the Rising Sun bring light into the dark temple!" exclaimed Orestos boldly. "If this one whom you have bound worships Ra-Harmachis the Unknown God, let Ammon tremble in his sanctuary! For Ammon—aye, and all the gods of Egypt—will not hold fast in any temple of Egypt, in this fateful hour, any man who worships the Unknown God."

And I heard the sound of sweeps. My river-boat was moving away.

"Mark the boat!" exclaimed the surly priest to the others. "The plague spreads. It is this man Moses who brings a chattering of the One God into Egypt again. He will lead forth his people to worship his god, will he? While the temple still stands, while the mighty columns are unthrown, the priests of Ammon will defend their god—aye, even against the Unknown."

"Let us take this heretic into the inner courts for a time, lest he of the smooth-tongue stir up the Pharaoh against us. We have turned the Pharaoh's mind from the One God; this one shall not win the King back to his god again!"

And they came into the place where I lay, lifted me, and bore me roughly up the paved way into the Temple of Karnak.

CHAPTER SIX



THE great Temple of Karnak at Thebes, into which the priests now bore me, is one of the world's wonders. The temples of our gods on Crete are in Labyrinth Palace—which indeed is a royal house that is a city in itself, so vast it is—and in the South Palace of Phaestos, second only to Labyrinth in splendor and size. But in Egypt, the Pharaohs according to their greatness build temples to their gods. And this temple Karnak indeed is the work of many Pharaohs: they have kept adding to it, each striving to outdo the others. So that the mighty hall of columns produced by this rivalry brought a choking to my throat, even bound and gagged as I was.

Mighty were these pillars as trees of the forest, and inscribed with pictures of gods and inscribed with hieroglyphs. Each one was topped by a massive lotus bud. And the place was a blaze of color.

Now, a bound man borne deathward is in no mind to note details of architecture, though of splendor unrivaled. And I am confused: there were two great portals, one within the other, why I know not; and an inner court of columns; and then the great hall. We came at last to a dark and smaller chamber where stood the sacred boat of the god, the ark of Ammon bearing the image, and silver sand before it. Leading off this place was a small room with massive door of bronze. Into this place they bore me and set me down, and barred the door and departed.

Far off, I heard a chanting to the god and mocking sounds of lutes.

Presently there came to my barred door a little wizened old priest, who stood a long time looking in through

the small window. Then he unlocked the door and came in.

His feet were naked and his head was shaven. He carried a smoking lamp, which he set on a stand of ebony and ivory I had not seen in the dimness. And he stooped over and studied my face. His face was dry as a mummy's, and covered with wrinkles as with a veil.

"A boy from the Red Lands," he muttered, "a mere boy. What does the god Ammon with a boy? What has come to the temple, that one should be brought bound to the holy place? If a god be great, should he not be merciful also?"

He knelt beside me and freed my mouth from the gag. From the folds of his robe he brought out a stone knife. For the moment I thought the knife was for my heart, but with rapid motions he cut my cords and freed me. And I sat on the stone and rubbed my wrists; and the scarlet scarab fell from the lambskin bag as I stooped, for it must have been loosed in the House of Hekt.

THE OLD PRIEST CRIED OUT and picked up the scarab, and turned it in his hands, staring down at the scarab and at me.

"Thermuthis!" he cried. "Thermuthis! Her beauty was like the sycamore tree that budded and gave forth gods!" And he raised the scarlet scarab to his forehead.

"You know Thermuthis?" I asked.

He seemed not to hear. He looked at me strangely.

"The hated of Ammon possesses the scarlet scarab!" he exclaimed. "How came you, youth of the Red Lands, to possess the amulet of Thermuthis?"

"I was seeking Thermuthis to restore it, when treachery brought me here," said I.

"You know the history of this scarab?" demanded the old priest.

I shook my head, for my lips were swollen and parched, and words tormented them.

"This scarlet scarab," said the priest, "was given by the Son of Pharaoh, brother of the Princess Thermuthis, to the Prince Moses when he was in favor in the Royal House. And Moses gave it in turn to Thermuthis, his foster-mother. And she, when Moses was about to flee for his life out of Egypt, gave it to him again. It was a token between them. Is not truth the red-blood of life? And this scarab, red as blood, image of eternal truth?"

"For there was a bond between Moses and Thermuthis as strong as that between mother and son: for the princess had turned her heart to the worship of the Unknown God—and their God was the same God. If he had need of her help, he was to send her the scarlet scarab. She would see him who bore it to her, whatever the times might be of evil or of good. And you in truth were taking the scarab to Thermuthis?"

"You know much, O ancient one," I said. "But you are priest of Ammon, and—"

"I am a prince of the royal blood," said the old priest proudly, "and in my youth I loved the Princess Thermuthis. I am old, now. I have been in the Temple for many years. When Moses studied here the ancient wisdom, I was one of his teachers. Should I not favor him who was favored of Thermuthis?"

He stood as if dreaming of things far off, and turned from me, and went out into the stone corridor again. But soon I heard his bare feet whispering on the stones, and he returned.

"Two things I ask," he said: "your name, and for what purpose you were bound and gagged and brought here by the High Priest?"

"You a priest of Ammon, and do not know!"

"My temple name is Maat-Ammon," he told me. "I have charge of the sacred boat and the ark of the god. Of the world without, I know nothing."

"I am Bronze Warrior of Crete," I told him, "Myenides, son of Phrasys King of Haggia, of the blood of Minos

and of Zeus. From the Labyrinth Palace I come to Thebes ambassador to the Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon."

"Woe to Ammon!" cried Maat-Ammon, raising both hands above his head. "This is evil the High Priest has done. Knew he that you are an ambassador? For the person of an ambassador is sacred."

I told him then all my story, and why I had come into Egypt—yea, I even told him something of the secret mission, for he was a man to be trusted. There was no guile in Maat-Ammon.



He thought awhile. "The galley *Minos-eye* is at the great wharf," he asked.

"It will surely be there," I answered, "and my river-boat with Orestos and my guards by the small pier near the House of Hekt. These have been on the river and passed the temple boat as we came hither."

"The Lord of Phaestos worships Ammon and Ptah, you say?" said Maat-Ammon. "And Ammon and Ptah are against you. You come to inquire of religious truths from the prophet Moses, you say, and to learn of his god Jehovah. What is the name of that god you worship, O Stranger?"

"I worship the One, the Unknown God," said I boldly, looking him in the eyes. "The High Priest believes this God that one whom Chu-m'-eten knew as Ra-Harmachis. For Ammon's sake, he would destroy me."

The old priest sighed. "You have been honest with me, Myenides, and put your very life in my hands. Moses was long in the Temple. I have seen him before the altar, upon the very silver sands, with the sons of the Pharaoh. When he bowed down before the Ark, whom think you Moses worshiped? The God Ammon-Ra?"

"The One God," said I. "He whom Moses calls Jehovah: for so do I, standing in worship before the altar of Zeus, worship in truth the Unknown God."

"Even so I, Maat-Ammon, prophet of the god, in secret adore the god of the Hebrews," whispered the priest. "For Ammon is but an image of wood or of stone, but Jehovah is the Living God. Fear no evil, Myenides! The shadow of the Eternal is upon this chamber."

And Maat-Ammon went out, and closed and locked the prison door behind him.

I thrust the scarlet scarab back into the lambskin bag and dropped it under my breastplates. And I sat rubbing my sore wrists and marveling.



The sound of distant lutes had become sweet in the dark temple of Karnak.

Now came the High Priest of Ammon and several shaven priests with him.

"For what purpose, O Son of Zeus," said the High Priest, "have you come into Egypt?"

"As ambassador from Minos to make a new treaty with the Pharaoh," said I.

"But the Lord of Phaestos, who is a high priest of our god, warns that you would seek out Moses and that you worship the god of the Hebrews. There are ever present in Egypt those who mourn for the god of Chum-eten, who abandoned Thebes, effaced the name of Ammon from the monuments, and brought ruin to our temples. And Phaestos says you are come to aid these heretics with the wealth of Labyrinth."

Now, this man was not like Maat-Ammon. The High Priest was not one in whom to put your trust. So I dissembled and asked:

"What know I, from the Green Isles, of the Hebrews? I am curious about their god, as I am curious about the gods of your temples. What do I know of Ammon or of Ptah? Or of Jehovah Yawe?"

"You are of divine blood," said another. "It is your right to know."

"Aye," said a third priest, "aforetime we have admitted to the schools of the temple Kings and the sons of Kings."

"We are of two minds about you," confessed the High Priest. "To cut you off, or to set you free. If we slay you, surely Minos will demand you of Tut-ankh-Ammon, and the One will inquire of us. But the King of Phaestos says you would encourage the broodings of the Pharaoh, who at times inclines again to that Ra-Harmachis he worshiped in his youth."

"The King of Phaestos is my enemy," said I, "for I am in line to succeed him and cut off his son as heir to the South Palace. What care I whom the Pharaoh worships? Let every man worship the god of his choice. Let Ammon keep the worshipers of Ammon."

"And if we let you live and go free," said the High Priest, "you will denounce us to the Pharaoh for seizing the body of an ambassador, sacred in Egypt."

"You have done this thing to me," said I coolly. "You have made riddles for the hierarchy. If I go free, I will denounce you."

The priests withdrew coldly, with no further words. A little later, they brought me a golden chair whose legs were the legs of lions. And they served me meats and fine cakes and wine.

On each of the two days following this visit, the High Priest questioned me; and ever I answered him, when he asked me again and again what I should do if I were set free, "I will denounce you." And I knew the priests were still of two minds what to do, and quarreled together about my fate.

On the third day Maat-Ammon came to my cell. "This day there is to be a funeral procession, when the body of a Prince of the Royal House is borne to the Valley of the Dead. And there will be many gods in that procession. Fear you not the hawk when it comes to your cell."

And Maat-Ammon smiled and departed.

IN THE AFTERNOON, AFTER I HAD EATEN, there arose a great stir in the Temple of Karnak. I looked out into the corridor by the small window of the door, and I saw many priests going about, wearing the masks of the animal gods.

There came at last a slender priest wearing white robes and a great mask like a hawk's head. This one unlocked my door and came in.

In a curious, hoarse voice he said:

"You bear an amulet in a lambskin bag. Let me see the amulet, if you please."

"You are too young to be a priest," said I, "for surely, your voice changes."

"Let me see the amulet of Thermuthis if you have it," insisted the voice, issuing hollow-toned from the hawk-mask.

I drew forth the lambskin bag, took out the scarlet scarab, and laid it in the outstretched hand of the hawk-god. And I cried out and took that hand in mine: for it was a hand I knew and never should forget, small and soft and warm.

And the one in the garb of a priest took off the great hawk's-head mask, and before me stood Hathane princess of Egypt.

But at once she donned the hawk's-mask again.

"Nay!" I protested. "Let me but look into your eyes, O Princess: for I had almost come to think I would never see you again!"

"Would you have priest of Ammon behold the Daughter of Pharaoh in your cell?" she asked. "Tut-ankh-Ammon my brother would sacrifice me to the god!"

"The gods forbid it!" I cried. "But you must go hence quickly. Go forth and join the throng and return

to the Palace. Now that I have seen you, I know my God will deliver me out of the power of Ammon."

And I added: "How came you by the hawk's-head mask?"

"Maat-Ammon brought me mask and robes," she answered. "He stands in the corridor to aid if danger comes. Should the High Priest come—"

"He will not come," I said. "The Unknown God would not let him come, with Hathane in my cell."

"NOW FOR THE SECOND TIME in life," said the voice in the mask, "Myenides and Hathane each looks into the other's face—and, O Bronze Warrior, I am afraid! As you fear the One God, tell me, tell me: *What is Hathane Princess of Egypt, to Myenides Prince of Crete?*"

"Can words tell what lies too deep for words?" I asked. "To the feasting guest, rare wine tops the feast; but more than bread, honey, meat and wine is the scent of the lotus-bud in the loved-one's hair. Lotus-bud from Tiy's lake, I will bear you back with me to Crete and make you queen of Haggia!"

"When I was a child," said Hathane, "I loved your father more than ever I could love my own, who was so stern and great. And if I loved the father—O Bronze Warrior, what is this in my heart that burns for you! I had seen you but once—yet when I heard you stood in the presence of death, I came here to you: Bronze Warrior, if you stood before Osiris, I would join you at the weighing of your heart!"

"You will go back with me to Crete?"

"I will go with you even to the land of Punt—aye, Bronze Warrior, even to Duat the Underworld, if the gods will it!" she said. "But you shall sue the Pharaoh for me, else there will be war between Crete and Egypt. But first, you must be free. Now listen, while I speak fast:

"Maat-Ammon, keeper of the sacred boat and ark of Ammon, has been to the Pharaoh. And he has counseled my brother at once to set you free. But the wily King of Phaestos intervened: he told my brother you worship the god of the Hebrews, and that this god is but Ra-Harmachis under another name. He said to Tut-ankh-Ammon you had boasted your Unknown God is greater than all the gods of Egypt.

"And my brother laughed, and said:

"The Lord his God cannot deliver Myenides out of the hand of Ammon! But lest through his magic he should escape, my chariots and my horsemen shall surround the Temple of Karnak. If the Lord his God be greater than the gods of Egypt, and Myenides break forth even through these my guards, through the chariot and the spear and the sword, I will then seek him with the army of Egypt to cut him down—yea, with all the host!"

"And the Pharaoh said: 'But if the Lord his God deliver Myenides free of the army of Egypt, and the Bronze Warrior should reach his galley, by his God I vow he shall there lie safe as in sanctuary. And toward night I will send an escort and a guard of chariots and of horsemen, and fetch him up in pomp to the Double House, and I will feast that night and honor the Bronze Warrior as ambassador from Crete.'

"And the King rose from the Great Chair of Horus, and raised his scepter and cried: 'Should I betray him, once he has reached safely the galley *Minos-eye*, and break this vow, let the Lord his God cut me off, and in that same manner as Myenides Prince of Haggia died!'

"And the Pharaoh's chariots and his horsemen now guard the gates of the temple, and the priests have set their watch through all its courts and corridors, to make sure that by your magic you do not escape."

"Yet for all this might of Egypt, I will go free," I said.

"I have talked with the Lord Agrestes," Hathane told me. "And before night, truly, your Cretans will take you forth—with the help of the Lord your God."

And with a swift movement, Hathane lifted off the hawk's head and held it out to me.

"Oh, take it! Put it on!" she cried with a little sob. "And these priestly robes! Quick! Quick!"

"For what purpose?" I asked blankly, holding the mask in my hands.

"How else can you escape from Karnak! Put on the mask—and go free!"

"And what would the priests of Ammon do to Hathane, when they discovered they had been tricked?" I cried. "Yea, verily, I will put on the mask, for love of Hathane of Egypt!"

I raised the heavy hawk's mask as if to set it over my head. But with swift motion, I slipped it back over hers.

"Go!" I cried. "Go swiftly, lest you be seen, questioned, and lost!"

We stood in silence face to face. With a sob, Hathane stepped close to me and touched my cheek. And I took the small hand and said:

"Though your body and my body may be parted by seas, O Lotus-bud, nevermore in this life or hereafter can space or time part the hearts of Hathane and the Bronze Warrior."

The door crashed shut. I stood with bowed head, moved to the soul, alone in my cell. . . .

That night, O Minos, the High Priest of Ammon came, and several priests with him. They took me forth out of the cell into the chamber of the great boat and the ark and the silver sands. They stood me facing the bow of the boat with my back to the outer wall. But someone in that dimness thrust my belt and sword into my hand; and softly, under my robe, I buckled on the belt.

And they brought torches and thrust them into brazen sockets on the walls.

And they brought a basin of gold and set it upon the silver sands before the ark of their god; and a black knife of the stone obsidian sacred to the gods upon a cushion of white silk brodered in gold with lotus buds.

THE HIGH PRIEST OF AMMON stood before the ark, with two acolytes in red robes behind him and held the white cushion and the long knife of black stone in both arms aloft before Ammon. And in voice like that of a flute he chanted:

"O Ammon-Ra! God of Oases, god of Thebes, all-mighty father of the Good God Tut-ankh-Ammon of the Upper and the Lower Egypts! Glory!"

"O Ammon-Ra! To whom your sons mighty in battles have raised this Temple of Karnak! Glory!"

"O Ammon-Ra! Harken unto your priests who in adoration bring kingly sacrifice. Hear us, Ammon!"

"From time beyond memory, each year without fail, the priests of the Temple of Karnak have slain for you a ram and poured forth upon the silver sands its blood for a libation, and covered your image with its skin!"

"O Ammon-Ra! One of the blood of Zeus has come into Egypt to defy you and all the gods of Egypt, to give aid to the heretics accursed of Ptah and overturn your image and set up Ra-Harmachis as god in the holy ark. And you have turned from us your face.

"O Ammon-Ra! Behold, now, in place of the ram we sacrifice to you a son of the god Zeus, that all men shall see you are mightier than Zeus—aye, and mightier than Ra-Harmachis and all other gods. Now, O Ammon, we will pour forth the blood of Zeus as libation upon the silver sands! Now we will cover your image in the holy ark with the skin of the reviler of the gods! Hear us, Ammon, and receive his blood!"

And from all parts of the sanctuary voices rose, crying: "Hear us, Ammon, hear us!"

The High Priest then turned to the two acolytes in red robes behind him and said:

"Fetch now the sacrifice to the silver sands!"

And the two acolytes moved toward me.

With a clang that shouted in that still place, I unsheathed my sword

"Harken, Ammon, if you have ears to hear, and you priests of Ammon in Karnak!" I shouted. "If the acolytes move one step nearer the Bronze Warrior, I will spill blood sacred to Ammon upon the silver sands!"

The acolytes stood where they were. And the High Priest cried out:

"At my call, Myenides, a thousand armed priests will throng this sanctuary to hew you limb from limb!"

"The image of your god on the boat," I said, "is a lump of painted and gilded wood. This night, you have set gilded wood against the Living God. Not against Zeus god of Greeks and of Cretans do you pit your cypress: for I, the Bronze Warrior, come into Egypt not as worshiper of Zeus as Athens worships him—I come as worshiper of the Unknown God, before whom mighty Zeus is but shadow, and your lump in the ark a deception and a lie in Egypt."

"He has profaned the holy place!" cried a voice, and a dozen priests shouted: "Cut him down, Ammon! Ammon, destroy him!"

"If Ammon be god, let Ammon cut me down, let Ammon destroy me!" I shouted. "If Ammon be god, what need has Ammon of a thousand priests to slay one defier of Ammon? Let the god slay me!"

Again rose the cry: "Cut him down, Ammon! Ammon, destroy him!"

"Cry out, O Egypt, to the lie in the ark!" I cried. "Cry out to the lump of wood that it cut me down! And then will I, the Bronze Warrior, cry to the Unknown God for aid—not for my own blood-sake, but as a sign to Egypt that the priests have set up in the Temple of Karnak for the people of Egypt a lie! Ammon, if you be god, slay me!"

The priests now burned frankincense and myrrh before the image of Ammon, and they cried out again to their god and said:

"O Ammon god of Karnak, hear us! Slay him! Slay him! Ammon, god of Thebes, hear us! The worshiper of an unknown god defies you! He has profaned your holy place! Slay him! Slay him!"

And the voices of the acolytes rang in the chamber calling:

"Cut him down, Ammon! Cut him down, Ammon!"

"Does your god sleep, that I still live?" I shouted. "He hears you not; he is dumb. But now I, the Bronze Warrior of Crete, lift up my voice to the Most High, the Unknown God!"

"O creator of stars and men, hear me! Who is more powerful on earth or in the skies than you, the Maker and the End? This lump of gilded wood? Ammon, an empty name?"

"O Unknown God, the god of Moses, the god of Hebrews, hear me! Make visible now your power in the Temple of Karnak! Cut down Ammon, O One God! Holy One, hear! Cut down Ammon!"

The temple shook. Out of the dark sky came a mighty roar of thunder. With a hissing and a crash, a lightning-shaft like a sword of fire smote down through the temple roof.

The chamber was thick with the smell of brimstone. And behold, that giant sword from heaven smote the gilded image of Ammon within the Ark. And the image of Ammon split with a loud noise and rolled out and crashed upon the silver sands. And the fragments of their god burst into flames and burned with dense smoke smelling of cedar. Aye, Minos, Ammon burned in the presence of my God!

The priests of Ammon, even the High Priest and all the hierophants of the Temple of Karnak cast themselves prostrate upon the ground.

And again the temple shook. The deeps of the earth moved and the walls trembled. And with a grinding and a roar, the wall of granite, the mighty wall behind me was torn asunder—like the blade of a leaf it was rent. Aye, the mighty rocks were split asunder and the gap widened. And through the broken wall came shouting Agrestes, Orestos and the men in brass from Crete.

And Agrestes ran past me, and seized the High Priest by his head and cried:

"I will smite off the head of the High Priest of Ammon as an offering, ere we go hence!"

Then I sprang forward and caught his sword-arm. "Behold, upon the silver sands Ammon yet burns before the Living God," I cried. "Would you have us sacrifice that which is Ammon's in this temple of lies? I say unto you, Agrestes, the Unknown God is in this place. Let the priest live, and come away!"

And all the warriors of Crete ran out of the accursed place into the clear air and a night of moonlight and of stars.

CHAPTER SEVEN



E fared forth from the Temple of Karnak in Thebes, and no man moved to hinder us.

And I said to Agrestes: "The chariots and the horsemen of Pharaoh are out in the night to slay me, should I escape from the Temple?"

Agrestes answered: "All this, Hathane the princess has warned us of. But first came Lord Orestos to the galley, mad with wrath, to say you had fallen into the hands of the priests of Ammon and had been borne bound and gagged into the Temple of Karnak. But the temple is vast. There are many buildings. And who could tell where Myenides might lie? But the Princess came to the galley, sent by Maat-Ammon."

"Where is Maat-Ammon?" I asked.

"He waits for us beyond the Way of the Sphinxes with men from our galley, to guide us to a hiding-place till the morrow, when we can find our way down to the river and your small boat will take us off. The Pharaoh has filled the night with his host, and we must fare warily."

We fled away swiftly, past the shops of the mummifiers and the shops of the makers of sarcophagi into the wilderness. And at the end of the Way of Sphinxes, Maat-Ammon came out of the night, and warned us to turn aside, for ahead were the horsemen of the Pharaoh searching the way with torches and with spears and with swords.

Maat-Ammon said: "Thebes is like a nest of wasps struck by a stick: it boils with the men of the Pharaoh. We will go about and enter the Valley of the Dead Kings. For Tut-ankh-Ammon has caused to be dug in the face of the rock a house for his mummy and Ba. The work is completed and the masons and artists have departed. We will flee thither and hide in the tomb of the King."

The face of the earth was almost day in the light of the moon. Against the sky, the line of the mountains loomed black, and to us seemed so near, a soldier could almost have touched the rock with the tip of his lance. Nor had I time in our mad flight to marvel at the wonder in the Temple of Karnak. For soldiers were everywhere—and we were forced to dodge in and out among the rocks. Hyenas slunk from our path. Lions roared in the brush.

And we came at last to a narrow reach of land, barren, forgotten of the gods, a vale rough and desolate and wild: the terrible Valley of the Dead Kings where

Pharaohs beyond count are said to lie amid their treasures in an eternity of sleep. And there was no open sign of man in all the vale save only rude mud-huts of watchmen of the tombs or of hewers of stone, and far off by the cliff, temples and shrines of the dead.

Maat-Ammon led us to an opening in the face of the cliff, and down stone steps to a corridor into an inner chamber, and thence to a second one, where in the justice of God the mummy of Tut-ankh-Ammon would soon lie in splendor—till temple-thieves or curious men of an unborn tomorrow discover the gate of his tomb. . . .

The burial of this Pharaoh, these eyes have seen. Yet Labyrinth shall be buried in the dust of ages ere man look again into the face of the cruel Tut-ankh-Ammon the lover of riches! His name is naught!

And Maat-Ammon produced from some cleft in the rocks barley cakes and a goatskin of sour wine. We ate and drank, and slept in the Pharaoh's tomb.

I dreamed that I was wrapped in winding-sheets and laid in a coffer of granite in a great case of painted and gilded wood: yet I could see through granite and through wood out into the chamber where my treasures were heaped. And eons passed. And eons passed.

And there came a knocking at the sealed door. The plaster fell, and men in strange dress came through, to stare about and to carry off my treasure. Aye, I saw them bear thence my golden chariot, my boxes of jewels, my throne-seat of ebony, my bed of gold, my image of the smiling maid. So I awoke, sweating.

Agrestes stood by me, his sword in his hand.

"You cried out, Lord Princl!" he exclaimed. "I thought the soldiers of Pharaoh had found us!"

"I dreamed," I said. "And when this body is given to earth, O comrade, hide it well—see to it, lest man shall come to dig me up!"

Agrestes shuddered. "Zeus give you healthier dreams," he said. "Neither do I forget we are sheltered in Pharaoh's tomb!"

THE DAY CAME WITH SUDDEN and awful heat. The sand blew about hot from the sun's rays. Yet I went forth to spy out the valley. And still it slept in the baking heat, narrow, desolate and wild.

And then I discovered, standing close by me on the topmost step of the stairs, a tall man in a white robe. He bore in his hand a staff of olive wood peeled and white. And his white-bearded face was gentle and kind, and yet infinitely wise. And the hair upon his head grew in two white tufts, one on either side of his broad brow, like unto two ivory horns.

When he spoke, his voice was deep and commanding: "Show unto me, O Gentile," he said, "the scarlet scarab in your lambskin pouch."

"How know you I bear a scarlet scarab in a lambskin bag?" I cried, astonished.

"I am Moses of the House of Levi," he answered me. "Thermuthis the Daughter of Pharaoh has sent to me a runner, who told me of your coming. You are the son of my friend Phrasys, King of Haggia."

I bowed unto Moses with the salute one gives to the Pharaoh, and drew forth the lambskin bag and placed the scarab in his hand.

"The scarab is yours, Prince Moses," said I.

He stood for a long time, staring down at the scarlet amulet in his hand.

"You know its story," he said at length, "and you came into Egypt in part to seek me. Yea, the Lord our God has taken you out of the power of Ammon and brought you safe into this wild place, where soon the Pharaoh's body shall lie in crumbling state."

"I am not yet safe—" I began.

Moses' eyes seemed to glow with an inward fire.

"There is no fear in Myenides son of Phrasys," he said. "For in the night I stood outside the Temple of

Karnak, beyond that wall now rent, and heard you defy the god of the wooden image. And Jehovah answered you!"

"The image of Ammon burned with a sweet savor," said I, "burned as if incense before the altar of the Most High."

"He that you have called the Unknown God answered you," said Moses. "Now that you know Jehovah is His name, what other question came Myenides into Egypt to ask of me?"

And I opened my heart to Moses, and learned of his wisdom all that you, O Minos, directed me to learn. These truths I will pour into your ear privily, when we are alone together.

And Moses said:

"Woe unto him who has known the truth and turned from the way to bow down to images of wood and images of stone! Woe unto the Pharaoh and his house, who yielded up their faith, beguiled by the priests of Thebes! Woe to Egypt, that has turned from the Living God, to sacrifice in her temples to legends and to lies!"

"For I will lead my people forth, and they shall come into the Promised Land. But the Pharaoh shall be as sand—verily, all Egypt shall be as a heap of sand now golden in its day, but which the winds of time shall scatter over the face of the land. I say unto you, Bronze Warrior, the years shall march through the Valley of the Dead Pharaohs by the thousands, and no man shall know where Tut-ankh-Ammon lies, and even his name shall be least among the Kings of this land!"

"And men shall say: 'What Pharaoh of Egypt was he who would not let the people of the Lord go forth?' And they shall search for that Pharaoh's name and find it not. So that it shall come to pass, this wise man will say, 'It was Amenhotep,' and another will say, 'Nay, it was Ramses.' And who in that future will rise up and say, 'It was Tut-ankh-Ammon?' But my name will be writ in the scrolls of the Most High as he who led his people out of Egypt."

"The Pharaoh will let you go?" I exclaimed.

"At first he will harden his heart and he will not let my people go. But the Lord of Hosts, He will show wonders to the people of Egypt, and my people shall despoil their masters and go forth—and build their altar in the wilderness. And you, Bronze Warrior, will pursue us, with the chariots and the captains of Pharaoh!"

"Nay, I will not pursue," I cried, "for the Lord your God is my God!"

"Behind all things I ask, there is a purpose of Jehovah. You will ride forth with the Pharaoh and pursue us even to the shores of the Red Sea. But see to it you walk not on the dry bed of the sea, lest the flood take you also."

"How could I walk on the bed of the sea, and the bed dry?" I asked, astonished at his prophecy.

"You will see what you will see," answered the Prophet.

"For I say unto you, Bronze Warrior, you will pursue."

"The Lord our God will not hold me guiltless, if I ride after you!" I protested hotly.

"You who shall be King of Haggia and King of the South Palace," declared Moses, "will obey the mandate of the Most High."

"The King of Phaestos lives," I began, and stopped—for I remembered the strange warning that had sprung from my lips in the House of Hekt: that in a month's time the body of Phaestos would feed the dogs of Thebes.

"What is that upon your forehead, Bronze Warrior?" exclaimed Moses, and pointed at my head with a long white finger.

And I, stupefied, raised both hands to my head, and lifted therefrom the ancient Uræus of Phaestos, the golden circlet of the South Palace.

"You will overturn the altars of Ammon and of Ptah that Phaestos set up," said Moses. "Hide this crown. You shall wear it when Minos enthrones you, for you

have stood fearless before the minions of Ammon and have come forth to uphold the faith of the One God."

"And—and Hathane?" I asked.

Moses smiled. "What force has man," he said, "like unto the power of true love? It transcends all things. It leaps all bounds. It shall have its own." And Moses raised both hands in blessing and turned away.

I looked out across the desolate vale. "Whither fare you, Moses?" I asked. "This is wild land, over which the hyena prowls, where the lion stalks his prey."

Moses stopped and turned and looked at me. I thought that there was a light upon his high forehead. And he said an incredible thing—yet, O Minos, I knew he spoke truth:

"I go into this wilderness," he said, "to talk with God."

Now, lest you would not believe the miracle, O Minos, I brought to the Hall of State in Labyrinth the ancient Uræus crown of Phaestos and laid it upon your knee. And rising, you placed it upon my head—but I speak of things you know. . . . The prophet Moses moved away down the Valley of the Dead Kings, and I stood musing and watching, by the gaping portal of the tomb of Tut-ankh-Ammon.

I HEARD, TOWARD NOON, THE RATTLE and roll of chariot-wheels. The sound came to us sharply while yet far off. At first, we thought the soldiers of the Pharaoh had discovered us. Yet soon we discerned a two-horse chariot coming alone up the valley at furious charge, golden in the sun.

"Now the gods make clear this mystery!" exclaimed Maat-Ammon, shading his wrinkled eyelids with quaking hand. "Yonder charioteer is lithe and slim and of the Pharaoh's height! And he wears the war-helmet of the King! Dare Tut-ankh-Ammon drive to us—alone?"

The horses came up. The driver checked them and tossed the reins to Agrestes who went up running. And the charioteer turned to me.

"Hathane!" I cried. "You—"

"My brother the King has crossed the limits of Thebes!" she panted. "Even now, he drives with his chariots and his horsemen hither. On your galley, you are safe, according to his vow. Here, is death for you! Leave these who are with you—the Pharaoh will not touch them; they can take to the hills. Tonight, I say, as ambassador to Egypt you must feast with the Pharaoh, and you needs must be upon your galley when he sends a chariot to bring you to the Double House.

"My river-boat lies on the Nile-bank at point nearest to us. We have yet time! Into the chariot! Oh, sluggard, awake! I will bear you to safety!"

"But Maat-Ammon! He is priest of the Temple!" I cried. "The Pharaoh will slay—"

"Haste, oh, haste!" she urged, her voice rising. "We must make the entrance to the valley before them! Our time is so brief! Let Maat-Ammon come—three can crowd into the chariot somehow! Let him come!"

She caught me by the arm and almost dragged me to the chariot. And Maat-Ammon followed. Then the priest, and I because I could not yet drive the horses, curled ourselves into the curve of the golden chariot of Tut-ankh-Ammon—aye, in the selfsame chariot fresh-gilded that later I saw set in the rock-tomb, the selfsame chariot I had seen in the dream.

There was scarce time to order my men to take to the hills and find their way later to the Nile, where my river-boat would take them off, before the Princess had lashed her two horses into furious gallop. Down that long valley we rocked and rolled, the gilded hooves striking sparks from the rocks, the ostrich plumes of the Pharaoh upon their heads shaking in the sandy blast.

Beyond, at the entrance to the valley, we swerved and made toward the river. The horsemen were almost upon us. We could hear their shouts. A volley of arrows fell

around us, and one quivered in the floor by Hathane's side.

Then I sprang from my sheltered place and stood between the Princess and the archers of the Pharaoh. With one arm I held to the rein-rest on the chariot's curve; with the other I encircled her waist, lest we be thrown out in that mad charge.

Hathane lost the helmet of her brother. The wig, worn by all noblewomen, blew off. And released from the great headpiece, her hair came uncoiled and flew out upon the hot wind in a black and scented cloud.

And she, all heedless of the peril and the oncoming chariots thundering after us, shouted in glee at the horses. Aye, as one of the Eumenides, she drove the chariot among the rocks and ragged places of the wilderness, avoiding a thousand times disaster and death with swift twists of her supple wrists. And ever the thundering horsemen drew nearer and nearer.

Even as all seemed lost and the chariots were upon us, there appeared suddenly upon a great rock a tall old man with long beard like snow. And upon his head the hairs stood up upon the sides of his forehead like unto ivory horns. And he bore in one hand a peeled staff that gleamed white in the sun.

He raised his staff. And lo! From the brazen sky there descended a dense cloud, shining white, that shut out the host of the Pharaoh and cut us off from them. And we saw the chariots of Egypt no more.

So we rumbled down to the river Nile and the little boat moored among the rushes. The Princess Hathane tossed away the reins, and catching Maat-Ammon and me by the arms, ran with us to her bark. With a thrust, we were out in the stream. And once again I owed life to the One, the Unknown God.

"What of the horses?" I asked, as I paddled the bark toward Thebes.

"If the charioteers do not find them, the horses will return to the stables," she said. "Aye, Thermuthis sent word to the Prince Moses. He knew we would pass that way; and his God our God delivered us."

"Driver of chariots," said I, "you held the horses like a goddess!"

"I can also make sweet music on a harp," she said. "I am truly a most gifted person. Join me sometime in a hunting, Bronze Warrior! And I will prove I can shoot a straight arrow and wing my bird at a shot."

"I believe the huntress," said I. "Now I must needs burn incense to Diana."

"What thought you of that shining cloud?" she asked.

"The shielding cloud of Jehovah was worth sailing from Crete to see."

"Thanks, Bronze Warrior!" said Hathane, with a little laugh.

"Thanks?" I repeated. "Thanks—for what?"

"A lesser man would have said it was the princess whom it was worth crossing the wide Pontus to see," said Hathane. "Such pretty words are not needed from Myenides to Hathane. So I thanked you for being true."

"It took a glory from the gods," I said, "to turn my wits from Pharaoh's daughter."

But at that time I said no word to Hathane or to any soul of the miracle of the uræus-crown.

And we came safely to *Minos-eye*, and Maat-Ammon and I boarded her.

Maat-Ammon and I stood by the rail, and Hathane sat in her bark under our lofty side. She called to me:

"When Tut-ankh-Ammon returns to the palace, he will tell me of these wonders; but as to who drove his chariot, he may guess but will never know!"

"Yet, if he should learn—" I began, in alarm.

She laughed away my fears. "I am Hathane, who played with Tut-ankh-Aten in the city Horizon-of-the-Sun's-Disk. My brother is fond of Hathane. I have driven his chariot before—and he will never harm me

for the sake of a horse or a chariot. Even in his blackest moods, when he broods on his shift of faith through the beguilements of these Theban priests, I alone of all the household dare approach him, I alone can bring smiles to his lowering face.

"Why, Bronze Warrior, I have played with him at archery and outshot him two to one at the mark—and he still smiling to see a woman's bow shoot true! Fear not my brother the King, now you are upon *Minos-eye*, and I your friend, Myenides!"

And from her light boat she waved her white hand, dipped the golden paddle in the stream, and moved lightly and gracefully across the Nile toward the western landing-place of the Double House.

CHAPTER EIGHT



HE slanting sail of my river-boat appeared upon the Nile late that same afternoon and tied up to the wharf beside us. Agrestes and the heroes returned—and no man of them lost; but Orestos had sprained his wrist from a fall among the rocks of the wild Valley of Dead Kings.

Agrestes came to the Royal House of the galley, and with him the nimble-tongued Orestos and the two counselors: dark-bearded Nases and Atenydes the Fox.

"The chariot will come from the Pharaoh, in a little time," said Agrestes, "to bear you to the Double House."

"I am about to dress for the feast," said I. "There is no need for haste—"

"We come neither to advise what you shall wear, nor to counsel haste, O Prince," said Atenydes the Fox. "But a little time ago, the soldiers of the Pharaoh sought you through all Thebes on the east bank as on the west. The chariots and the horsemen searched even the Gardens of Tiy, the fields of the florists near the Royal House, and the City of the Dead. And the Egyptians sought you as far as the Valley of the Dead Kings, and pursued the golden chariot when the Princess Hathane drove you madly down to the Nile."

"And I am now safe aboard the galley," said I.

"Do you then deliver yourself now to Egypt?" cried the Fox.

"Would you trust your life in the keeping of those same warriors from whom, an hour gone, you fled?" demanded Nases.

"I am no fool," said I. "Did not the Pharaoh say, 'If the Lord his God deliver Myenides free of the army of Egypt and he reach his galley, I vow he shall there lie safe as in a sanctuary'? Aye, and did not the Pharaoh say, 'Toward night I will send an escort and a guard and fetch him up to the Double House, and I will feast Myenides that night and honor the Bronze Warrior as ambassador from Crete'? And did not the King say: 'Should I betray him and break this my vow, the Lord his God cut me off, and in that same manner as that in which Myenides died?'"

"The Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon is a man of double-talk and bloated with guile," retorted Atenydes the Fox. "You have defiled the Temple of Karnak. The sacred image of Ammon is ashes upon the silver sands of the sanctuary. Is not this Pharaoh by his kingship ruler over all the temples of Egypt? And will the Pharaoh forget the burned image, the desecrated ark, the broken roof, the riven wall? That your God had power over the god of Karnak, we think, will add fuel to the royal hate, and—"

"The King of Phaestos," Agrestes broke in, "is with the Pharaoh. Phaestos has been made 'Friend of the Pharaoh,' a royal honor. Surely, he whom you have twice struck down will not fail to fan the Pharaoh's wrath!"

"Shall I, the Bronze Warrior, sulk in my ship like Achilles in his tent?" I cried. "Shall I prove coward in the eyes of Hathane? Twice the daughter of Pharaoh has risked her life to come to me. Would you have me skulk among my warriors in the belly of the ship? Nay, by Zeus! Now I will go to Hathane!"

"It were wiser to let the anger of the Pharaoh cool for a little—" began Atenydes the Fox.

"Since you grow timid for my sake," said I, "let a hundred of our warriors arm themselves in bronze and fare with me, bearing all their arms. And you, counselors of Minos, shall attend me, with Agrestes, captain of the guard."

"And I!" exclaimed Orestos.

"For love of me and the safety of the galley, you will hold it with a hundred," I ordered. "We may come forth hastily off the western shore, and the ship should be ready to sail. Have boats on the west shore, prepared to take us off if there be need. Does that satisfy, O mice of Crete?" And I smiled.

"The mice of Crete know your will," grumbled Agrestes. "It will have to serve. But you will be alone in the rooms of state! Your guard cannot attend you at the feasting."

"My twelve shall dine with me in the great hall," I promised, "and the others will be within call. We will be alert. But the Pharaoh has sworn by the gods—"

"Painted images!" retorted Agrestes. "You have seen Ammon burn."

"Did the Princess Hathane assent to your attending the feast?" asked Orestos.

"Hathane has said that I must attend the feast," said I.

"I have heard tell, Agrestes," said the nimble-tongued, "that the Princess can sway the Pharaoh's will, even when his mood is black. For there was brought before the King a looter of tombs—that was the charge. He stole an amber necklace from Thothmes' tomb in the rocks. And the Pharaoh condemned the wretch to death. But the Princess Hathane told the Pharaoh the fellow had picked up the necklace in the Marketplace of the Wine Merchants—she saw him do it as she passed through in her litter; and she demanded from her brother the wretch's life."

"And verily the Pharaoh let him go," declared Nases, nodding his head. "The thief was given a taste of the rod and sent on his way rejoicing, free to thieve again."

"That the wretch was a thief is no proof he stole the amber necklace from Thothmes' tomb," said I. "The Princess spoke truth. The jewel was stolen by a ragged beggar named Impara, and the fellow before Pharaoh, though a thief, stole not from Thothmes' tomb."

"Then the Princess Hathane is favored of the Pharaoh," said the counselor Atenydes, "and Prince Myenides has stolen her heart away. It may well be my Lord the Prince can fare in safety to the Double House. But let him go with a hundred—and let him be alert, and beware the wine in the cup."

"Who told me ere this to beware of the wine-cup?" I exclaimed. "I will drink only that tasted by others. I will not quaff poison at the Pharaoh's feast."

And with that, they had to be content. . . .

I bathed in scented water and donned rich garments and golden mail for the Pharaoh's feast. And I drew on my knee-high boots of crimson elkskin, and placed upon my head the helmet lofty and plumed.

Toward sundown, chariots came upon the wharf of Thebes, for they had landed from a barge not far off. A captain came, leading up the golden chariot of Tut-ankh-Ammon and two fresh horses brilliantly harnessed, with gaudy tassels and plumes. And the captain cried in a loud voice:

"The Glory of the Rising Sun, divine Son of Ammon Tut-ankh-Ammon, Pharaoh of the Upper and the Lower Egypt, to Myenides Prince of Crete, greeting!"

"By the Lord your Unknown God the Pharaoh swears you shall have safe conduct to the Double House and back to your galley. On the Throne of the Living One will he sit to do you honor as ambassador from Crete, upon the Great Seat of Horus will the Pharaoh receive you. And he will give this night a feast in your honor in the Hall of State. Behold, the King's own chariot awaits you!"

I fared forth from the galley, now for the second time riding in the golden chariot of Tut-ankh-Ammon, and my hundred warriors with Agrestes commanding. And the counselors Nases and Atenydes fared with me.

The Captain of the Chariots, beholding my array, cried out:

"You, my Lord Prince, were invited to the King's Feast, but you ride forth with an army."

"I am ambassador to Egypt," said I, "and these warriors are my escort."

"You travel like a king of kings," grumbled the Captain. "I would not care to cross swords with these warriors. Your escort is seasoned to battle, and I'll wager a gold ring they fight hard."

"Would the Army of Egypt care to see what a hundred Cretans can do against ten thousand?" I asked, smiling. "By the gods, we would welcome a trifle of hewing and hacking ere night! While soon we shall be feasting, our loyal swords, long idle and dry in the scabbards, will go hungry. Is it not fitting the Pharaoh furnish wine for the warrior, blood for the sword?"

"We will not feast your swords," said the Captain dryly. "We would be good hosts, but we are pledged with our lives to guard you. And mark you, stranger Prince, I have seen the Temple wall. If your god can crack granite to get you forth from Ammon's might, I care not to see what he could do to the Army of Egypt!"

"What I want to know," spoke up an officer of the Egyptian escort eagerly, "is where you learned that magic that raised between the King's chariot in which you rode and us, that burning cloud. By head of Ptah, my knees still quake at memory of that awful cloud!"

"That was no magic," I answered him. "The Lord that is my God spread his cloak between us—and your host turned back. It was none of my doing; my God is no pitchy image that burns at a lightning flash."

"We are soldiers, not priests," said the Captain. "What have we to do with the powers of your dread God?"

And yet in a little time his body and his Ba rolled together in the deeps of the Red Sea; and his mummy shall not dwell in its House of Death, nor his Ba receive offerings at the shrine. But at that time I knew nothing of this. I was thinking only on treachery, and watching lest the Pharaoh entice me to my death.

Yet, when my mind turned back to that lightning bolt in Karnak and the pillar of cloud, I was at peace. I thought no more of evil: for the Unknown God was with me, even amid the Army of Egypt and ten thousand swords loosened in their heavy scabbards of brass to cut me down.

O Minos! Let an altar be raised in Labyrinth to the Unknown God! Aye, and send to Athens that upon Acropolis and in the presence of Zeus they raise one there—for Zeus, to whom we have prayed, has the weakness of men—he walks in dust; but this God I worship treads the path of stars.

AS WE RODE TOWARD THE BARGES of the Pharaoh, I looked back at the city of Thebes. Against the dark mountains of Africa the pylons of the temples towered above the flat roofs, and slender obelisks glittered with silver and with gold; and Egypt's pennants of red and white streamed on the hot air from a hundred cedarn masts on temple gates.

And we rode down to the royal landing on the east bank, and were taken aboard the gay barges aflutter

with flags, and so passed swiftly over the Nile to the landing by the old palace of Amenhotep that Tut-ankh-Ammon had refinished for his residence in Thebes.

As we rolled off the barge upon the landing-place, the day still over Thebes like a brazen cup, I heard from far off the pleasant sounds of water-wheels; I saw to the south the bright lake of beautiful Tiy, Amenhotep's queen, grandmother of Ankhsepenaten the Pharaoh's wife: I saw the lovely waters shining through the sycamores and the sacred persea trees. And the broad lush meadows were musical with doves murmuring among the olives and songs of desert larks circling heavenward. And I saw the Palace of the King.

Behind the great mass of the Double House, the west burned gloriously. I saw the great outer wall, and the tops of columns of an inner court. I saw one bewildering flash of brilliant colors beyond my stylos to paint. As I stared, marveling, the night smote the glory—and all was dark.

But the portal glowed, and torches flared under an awning striped in red and white; and strains of lutes, timbrels and throbbing drums poured forth in the yellow light.

Straightway slaves of the palace ran out to hold our horses. There were litters coming, bearing noble ladies, and chariots unnumbered.

NOW, I WAS IN THE VESTIBULE; and a naked Nubian slave-girl took off my heavy helmet and twined lotus buds in my hair, and others removed my crimson boots and bathed my feet in fragrant water. One passed me a curious ring of blue and white faience: "For luck," she said, noting I was a stranger, "you break and throw it away after the wine and the feast."

"I will don my boots," said I to the Nubian who was bearing them away.

"Only kings appear before the Pharaoh in boots," objected the voice of the Captain of Chariots, behind me.

"I am Bronze Warrior of Crete," I insisted, "and rank with kings; and I will yet be king."

"Princes appear barefoot before the Pharaoh," said the Captain, raising his voice.

I exclaimed: "I am ambassador from Crete—I am here in Minos' stead. I will appear before the Pharaoh according to the dignity of my office. My boots!"

"It is forbidden—" began the Captain, his face red.

"Is the King of Phaestos within?" I asked.

"He is in the Hall of State," answered the Captain.

"And is the King of Phaestos booted?" I demanded.

"He is a King and he wears his boots," he assented.

"I am ambassador of Minos, King of Kings, Lord of the Mid Sea," I repeated with greater emphasis, "and I will wear my boots."

Not that I cared about the boots, O Minos: but I knew it would not be wise, as your ambassador, to suffer this indignity—and proud Phaestos within wearing his gilded boots! So they brought me my footgear and set them on my feet. And I entered the hall.

And first I saw the great hall was wainscoted in tiles covered with gleaming gold; and above, rich tapestries. And the smooth pavement was painted with scenes in a fen: the water rippled and the sedges waved; and there were frisking calves at play, frightening marsh-birds from their nests. And overhead, on the ceilings, were painted white doves and golden butterflies.

In a niche in the wall, on my right, a statue stood, enameled as in life, of a beautiful maiden with lustrous black eyes, and a strange smile on her lovely face.

The voice of the Captain, who seemed to hold no grudge because of the episode at the portal—and who indeed later taught me to drive a chariot in Thebes—spoke over my shoulder:

"It is the statue of the Queen Ankhsepenaten," he said, "made for the Pharaoh before they were married. The

image is precious in the King's eyes, and he has given orders that it be placed at his funeral in his House of Death in the Valley of the Dead Pharaohs, with the treasures of his house."

And in the eternal dark, O Minos, sealed within the rock, there to this hour smiles the beautiful Ankhsempaten.

There was laughter in the hall, and a stirring of the crowd. I looked and saw a gallery on the side magnificent in lazuli and in malachite and in gold. And there stood the Pharaoh in robes of state, the double crown upon his head with its golden uræus, and in his left hand the sacred ankh of life. Beside him smiled the living one for whom the smiling image was made; and at her side, looking down at me and smiling also, the beautiful Princess Hathane. And with them, too, an aged woman whose face was still fair to see: this one, the Captain said, was the Princess Thermuthis, foster-mother of Moses, who saved him from the bulrush ark. But I had no eyes for the others when I beheld the face of Hathane.

And they upon the splendid balcony cast down to us bracelets beyond price, and rings and great collars of jeweled gold. And Hathane cast down such a collar to me.

And the Queen Ankhsempaten then laughed, and cried: "Is that your Bronze Warrior, Hathane?" And leaning over, the Queen cried, "For the ambassador from Crete!" and threw down to me handfuls of precious rings and bracelets exquisite for their gems.

But Tut-ankh-Ammon stared at me haughtily and spoke to them, and the balcony was swiftly deserted.

The Throne of the Living One, Great Seat of Horus, stood at the farther end of the Hall of State. The chair was set upon a dais that rested on a gorgeous mat. And over the chair stood a rich canopy ornamented above with uræus snakes; and upon the heavy base I saw a frieze of griffins, symbols of wisdom.

And the Pharaoh entered with his fan-bearers, the Friends of the Pharaoh, the great lords of the court. And in that throng strutted the new Friend of the Pharaoh, the King of Phaestos.

THE LORD OF THE PALACE CAME and brought me before Pharaoh.

"Myenides the Bronze Warrior, Prince of Haggia upon Crete, and Ambassador to Egypt from Labyrinth," intoned the Lord of the Palace.

And I bowed to the Pharaoh, but raised not my arms.

"We have heard that you were in Thebes," said Tut-ankh-Ammon in a clear, cold voice. "We have been told, also, that the Ambassador from Crete worships that god whom we in our youth, before wisdom came to us, worshiped also. Earthquake and storm, O Bronze Warrior, have smitten Thebes and her temples before. Do you impute what was for you a happy chance to the intervention of your god?"

"I was a prisoner of the god Ammon in his Temple of Karnak," said I, "and was brought to the silver sands for sacrifice—I, an ambassador, whose person is sacred among all nations! And a thousand armed priests were my guards within; and the chariots and the horsemen of the Living One were without the walls.

"Where then was the power of your god Ammon, that he could not hold me? If Ammon be a god and not a name only, surely your Ammon is greater than the forces of this earth, lightning and earthquake!

"The image of the god was in the holy ark; the ark was upon the sacred boat; the boat was upon the silver sands in the holy sanctuary of Karnak. But the Unknown God smote the image of Ammon with fire, and the image broke and rolled upon the silver sands, and burned with a great smoke in the presence of the Lord my God.

"And the earthquake tore asunder the walls of the Temple of Ammon and let me forth into the night. And I passed through the host of the Pharaoh and slept that night in your House of Death in the Valley of the Dead Kings.

"And this day, in the morning, I rode forth in your own chariot of gold to the Nile and entered safely upon my galley *Minos-eye* again. And your horsemen and your chariots, O Pharaoh, in that ride to the river, were almost upon me, when there fell from heaven a shining cloud and cut them off and turned them back.

"These things are known to all Egypt. Ammon failed you, but the Living God was with me."

Then the Pharaoh touched his forehead with a trembling hand, and bowed his head in thought.

"The priests of Ammon," said Tut-ankh-Ammon, "were without authority to seize the person of an ambassador. Letters from the Minos, which you have had delivered to me, have informed us of the purpose of your visit. These matters I will consider with my council, and will consult with you again."

He hesitated and stared at me. "I like bold men," he said, as if to himself. "There be wonders in Egypt beyond the powers of priests to explain."

"May not the Living One, the Son of the Sun," said I, boldly, "have questioned the wrong priests?"

I know not what the King of Egypt would have answered, for at that moment the King of Phaestos said, in a dry, harsh voice:

"Mark the arrogance of the Prince of Crete, who appears before the King of Kings wearing his boots!"

But the face of Tut-ankh-Ammon grew dark. He turned upon Phaestos savagely and said:

"When did the Pharaoh of Egypt consult an alien king upon the manners or the clothing of the court? The Bronze Warrior here represents the person of the Minos, who also is a King of Kings and who rules the wide Mid Sea. Not for himself as a prince did he refuse to enter our presence barefoot: for the Captain of my Chariots has reported to me that which befell at the portal. Not for himself, but as ambassador to our court did Myenides Prince of Crete refuse to be abased. Let Phaestos be silent! We will go to the banquet."

The throng in the chamber of state followed the Pharaoh into the great hall or Usechet, as the Thebans call it, where tables banked with flowers and shining with crystal and gold awaited us.

And the Lord of Phaestos and Lord Parmedes, whom I had already noted in the crowd, were standing a little apart from the other guests, and whispered together. As I entered the feasting hall, I knew they were watching me—even as carrion birds eye the prey already dead.

My twelve were in the feasting hall, seated two and two at small round tables. They stood as I passed by on my way to the table of the Pharaoh.

This Usechet had tall columns which supported a flat roof and raised it several feet above the side-walls to let in air. The hall opened upon a pleasant court, with a tiled pool in the midst aglow with lotus blooms. Through an open door, I could see vine-covered walls, and beds of flowers: poppies and scarlet sage, larkspur, heliotrope, amaranth and asphodel; and ornamental trees, and an arched walk leading among them to a gayly painted summerhouse.

I was told that there was a terraced roof above the women's quarters on the second floor, where the court gathered on summer evenings to enjoy the cool north breezes. And cleverly made funnels upon this terrace directed the north breeze down into the sleeping chambers below. On the opposite side of the banquet hall was the 'Aha, a narrow and beautiful house, the private residence of the Pharaoh.

In a distant corner the King's musicians played soft, strange music with the mellow tones of long drums of

earthenware throbbing through it. And harps sang, lyres made melody, flutes poured forth music sweet as songs of larks. At the ends of the hall, stood the great amphoræ of wine against huge banks of flowers. And beyond the round tables where sat my twelve, women of lesser degree were seated cross-legged upon soft rugs.

The slaves served us soup, fish, the venison of gazelles, good red beef broiled, and cakes of many kinds. And there were vegetables in abundance—green peas, beans, and onions (which their priests cannot eat), cabbages and radishes, celery, asparagus and lentils. The venison was roasted and garnished with mint. And they served us ripe olives preserved in oil, a delicate jelly of the jujube fruit, and figs, dates, pomegranates and melons. And they poured for us several kinds of beer—one, O Minos, as fragrant as wine—and four kinds of wine. And after each course the naked Nubian slave-girls brought us finger bowls and napkins of linen.

When the nuts and raisins had been eaten, the slaves cleared the tables of bronze and of gold and of glittering glass, leaving only the flowers. And the slaves brought in mighty mixing bowls and filled them to overflowing with old wine. And the dancing girls trooped in, the music became louder and livelier, and the guests around me waxed friendlier and more animated.

NOW I SAT UPON THE RIGHT HAND of the Pharaoh, and opposite were the Queen and the Princess Hathane. And I talked with Hathane across the table—and this was the first long talk with the Princess that ever I had. I forgot all other things in the course of it—which well-nigh cost me my life.

Not till late did I discover Phaestos and his minion Parmedes were sitting at a round table by themselves, near but behind me. And by that table the slaves had set a great amphora of wine. And there was brought to me a cup of wine. Presently I reached and took the golden cup and raised it to my lips.

"Bronze Warrior," cried Hathane, leaning forward, "the wine in your cup never came from the King's bowl!"

I set down the golden cup, and spilled wine upon the snowy cloth.

"Saw you whence it came?" I asked.

"It is from the amphora by the table of Phaestos and Parmedes," she said, and her cheeks were pale.

"O Rising Sun!" I cried to the Pharaoh. "I am your guest, seated in the place of honor upon your right. Do I not then drink wine from the King's bowl?"

"Of a certainty you drink wine from the King's bowl!" exclaimed the Pharaoh, now in jovial mood. "Fear you poison? It has been tested by the royal taster of wine in my presence: it may roll you under the table, but it will not harm you."

"But the wine in my cup, O Pharaoh, came not from the King's bowl," I said.

The Pharaoh sprang up and stared at my cup. "Who served the Prince of Haggia?" he roared.

Then spoke the Princess Hathane. "The servants of the Pharaoh," she told him, "brought the Bronze Warrior a golden cup of wine from the King's bowl, but the Lord Parmedes, when the Bronze Warrior was engrossed in talking to me, took his cup and placed this other one in its stead. The cups look the same."

"Is it not true, O Pharaoh," I asked, "that *all* wine served in the King's hall is tested before it is served?"

"All the wine is tested," said the Pharaoh.

"Then let my Lord Parmedes drink the cup," said I.

Parmedes sprang up with an oath. "Why should I become wine-taster to the Prince of Haggia?" he cried. "The Prince has heard the Pharaoh: all wine in this hall has been tested before it was served. Let the Prince empty his own cup, O Pharaoh!"

The Pharaoh sat down. He toyed with his own wine-cup. There was a curious smile on his thin lips.

"The Lord Parmedes," he said, "will drink the wine from the Bronze Warrior's cup—in honor of the ambassador from Crete. The Lord Parmedes can scarcely refuse to pay his countryman this honor, for the Cretan lord has heard: all wine served here has been tested before it was served. *Drink, Parmedes, to the Bronze Warrior!*"

Parmedes shook. "O Pharaoh," he stammered, "I have drunk too much already. And I am not friendly to the Prince of Haggia. He put me in fetters on the way hither, and threw me into prison. I will not drink from his cup."

Tut-ankh-Ammon raised his ivory scepter. "Guards!" he cried. "Aid the Lord Parmedes to *empty* the Bronze Warrior's cup!"

Four huge guards of the King sprang forward. Two seized the Lord Parmedes by his arms and held him fast; a third caught him by chin and forehead and forced back his head and his clenched jaws; the fourth lifted my golden cup and poured the red draught into Parmedes' mouth.

Parmedes gave a great cry, as the four loosed him. For a moment he stood, white as a papyrus sheet, swaying a little; and he cried out again, and fell, and writhed upon the pavement, and lay still.

The Pharaoh clapped his hands. "Let the slaves drag out the carrion," he said. "The poisoner is served. The Lord your God is with you still, O Bronze Warrior!"

"The Princess Hathane," said I, looking into his eyes, "is with me also: for it was she who warned me not to drink the cup."

The Pharaoh drew from his finger a ring with a great gem set in it, water-blue and divinely clear, and gave it to his sister. "Wear then," he said, "the King's own ring."

And he lifted his own cup of gold and passed it to me. "Drink wine from the King's bowl only," he said, "and from the King's own cup, Bronze Warrior. And forget not to bear the cup away with you, at the end of the feasting, for to break and throw away your lucky ring: for the cup is yours and the luck is yours, this night!"

And the Lord of the Palace brought to the Pharaoh a second cup of gold.

I rose and raised my arms in salute. A slave filled my gift-cup from the King's bowl, and I drank.

"O Pharaoh," said I, "you are the fount of justice. Now, having beheld your justice, I, Myenides Prince of Haggia, ask a favor of the King of Kings."

"Speak, Myenides," he said. "May it be within my power to grant."

"I am Bronze Warrior of Crete," said I, "an office as you know falling only to princes royal of the House of Haggia, the kinsmen of Minos, of the blood of Zeus. As Bronze Warrior, mine is the duty of seeing to the defense of all the coasts of Crete. As Bronze Warrior, I stand in rank second only to Minos, King of Kings. And following my father—though I pray the day be far off—I will be King of Haggia upon Crete."

The Pharaoh bowed, and sipped his wine, watching me narrowly with his bright, dark eyes.

"I have come to Egypt," I went on, "to sign a new treaty with you, in the name of Minos of Labyrinth. To bind this treaty, I ask that you give me to wife Hathane the Princess, to rule with me when I am King."

Phaestos sprang up with an oath. But those near him pulled him down.

And the Princess Hathane sat with head bent and cheeks brighter than the wine within my cup.

"Hathane," the Pharaoh asked, "do you favor this Prince?"

"O brother," she said, looking up, "I love the Bronze Warrior."

"I meant you for Babylon," muttered the Pharaoh, greatly disturbed. "I will consider this matter, Myeni-

des. We have not yet signed the treaty. A Princess of Egypt must wed not as her heart desires, but in the interest of the throne. I cannot answer you tonight."

"Crete has been a defense for Egypt upon the Pontus," said I. "Her ships have served Egypt well. The friendship of Crete, ruler of the Mid Sea, is no small thing—"

The face of Tut-ankh-Ammon grew dark. "You are gifted with words, Myenides!" he exclaimed. "I would drink my wine in peace. Take care lest you say too much, and for all time I tell you nay!"

And he swallowed more wine. "I think I will answer now—" he began, when a deep rich voice filled the great hall.

"O Pharaoh, Glory over us!" it cried. "Hear us!"

The startled guests turned toward the far end of the hall. The Pharaoh sprang to his feet, still grasping the new cup the Lord of the Palace had brought him.

At the far end stood two tall old men. And I knew one of them by the white hair like ivory horns upon his forehead; and the other man, I knew, must be Aaron his brother.

"Moses!" cried Tut-ankh-Ammon in a great, stern voice. "What do you here?"

"Thus said the Lord God of Israel," cried Moses. "Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness."*

"Who is this God of Israel, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" cried the Pharaoh in great wrath. "I know not your god, neither will I let Israel go!"

And then Aaron answered and said: "The God of Israel has met with us. Let us go, we pray you, three days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to the Lord our God, lest he fall upon us with pestilence or with the sword."

"Why do you, Moses and Aaron, let the people from their works?" cried the Pharaoh. "Get you back to your burdens! The Israelites become a multitude, and you cause them to rest from their tasks."

And he sent them forth out of the Double House.

But Moses and Aaron chanted as they went forth, over and over again: "Let my people go! The Lord God said: Let my people go!"

And Pharaoh summoned an officer and bade him to give the people of Israel no more straw with their mud for the making of bricks, and to see to it they made as many bricks as they had before made with straw. "Lay more work on Israel!" he ordered. "Make this people sweat over their bricks! And see to it, I hear no more of this foolishness."

The Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon stalked from the banquet-hall and went into his own house. The guests left their wine unfinished and went forth to their litters and chariots. As I moved with heavy heart toward the portal, I felt a light touch on my arm.

I turned to see Hathane standing by me.

"Be strong of heart!" she whispered. "Our God will give me unto you. Look, Bronze Warrior, the magic ring in your hand is whole! Break it, break it, and cast the pieces away!" And with a sob, she added: "We need all our luck tonight!"

I snapped the blue and white ring and cast the pieces ringing upon the pavement. And the Princess smiled and said:

"Good night. Your favor will be granted you—for I will talk with my brother, and he will not refuse."

"The Lord God grant you are right," I answered her. "May He guard you by day and by night until I make you my wife, O Lotus-flower! Good night."

I remember little of the journey back to the galley. I was thinking of the two leaders of the Israelites, Moses

and Aaron. Their assurance had been so great, from strength given by the Most High, that even the Pharaoh upon his gilded throne was daunted; and something like the first breath of fear smote the hearts of the merry Egyptians.

CHAPTER NINE



ALL the slave, once free, of his own will, return to the taskmaster again? Egypt, O Minos, knew that he would not—and when Moses asked that Israel be allowed to go a "three-day journey into the wilderness" to sacrifice to Jehovah, Egypt knew that the people would never return to the making of bricks.

Now were your affairs and mine, O King of Kings, at blackest ebb of tide! And the signing of the treaty and the loveliness of Hathane alike seemed lost to me.

A turncoat and changeful Pharaoh was ruling Egypt. Too long, for your sake and mine, O Minos, he put off his decisions! And now, with a rush, came the Hebrew crisis—and the horrors and terrors of the Ten Plagues; and Tut-ankh-Ammon had for Cretan affairs neither time nor mind.

For four hundred and thirty years, O Minos, this Hebrew race has been living in Egypt, and served as slaves during a time immemorial. It is a race, from all I have seen, among the least of the world's peoples, more used to wandering and living a semi-wild life in tents than to the life of civilized man in houses and in cities. A simple people, these Hebrews, who eat out of bowls of stone and seem of one race with the nomads of the desert. Yet surely they have played a mighty part in making Egypt rich!

And now the Hebrews have increased in numbers; they have become strong; and the Egyptians fear them. The priesthood and the government of Egypt alike fear the return of the heretic worship, the One-God worship of Chu-m'-eten. It was in this hour of dread, O Minos that Moses and Aaron raised their voices in the ears of Tut-ankh-Ammon! Verily, Jehovah chose well his hour!

From that moment when I first saw Moses and Aaron in the King's feasting hall, in the Double House, I knew in my heart that, until the matter of the Hebrews had been settled for all time either for or against the Prince Moses, I could hope for little from the Pharaoh's hands. That the Israelites would go free, I knew, for could I not of my own evidence measure the awful power of Jehovah?

My great fear was lest, in some black mood, the Pharaoh destroy the copy of the Treaty I had laid before him, and send away my Lotus-flower to be queen in Babylon.

And also I now began to fear for the Pharaoh's health. The blackness of his moods was in his heart also. If Tut-ankh-Ammon should die, who would rule in Egypt? What manner of man would hold my destinies in his hand?

O Minos, I do confess that, dear to me as this matter of the Treaty was, for hours together I forgot the Treaty! I paced the confined deck of Royal House in *Minos-eye*, back and forth, to and fro: and it was Hathane, Hathane, Hathane that kept me from my sleep and came near to burst my heart.

In these black days, I learned to drive the horses and to guide the chariot. With shame I acknowledge that I, a farer of the seas, in our own land of fine chariots had never driven chariots. And it was the Captain of the King's Chariots that taught me to drive.

And now there came upon Egypt the terrors of the Ten Plagues. Of these wonders, O Minos, surely you have heard. The Unknown God favored your ambassador now in two ways: I was permitted to behold the trial before Pharaoh of the magic of Moses and Aaron on the one hand and of the priests Jannes and Jambres of the

*The disk here agrees almost word for word with *Exodus*: V, 1-10.

Temple and Pathenthis the chief magician, on the other; and the galley *Minos-eye*, the Cretans aboard her, and all those in Egypt precious in my sight—Thermuthis and beautiful Hathane—were free from the horror and the terror. The Lord my God stretched forth his hand over them and shielded all from torment. In the presence of this miracle, O King of Kings, who can doubt the power of the Unknown God?

Moses showed his wisdom by beginning with magic: for had he at once brought upon Egypt any wonder or plague that Pathenthis and the priests could not do also, they would refuse to make the trial with him, averring their gods too great to make a show before an unknown god. But Moses began with simple things, magic familiar to men in dark temples: the ancient serpent magic and the magic of the changing water. And the priests of Ammon, knowing they also could do these tricks, were beguiled into a contest with the Most High.

Now it came about that, through Hathane's intervention for me, I was often at the Double House after that first feast. And a few days after the feast in my honor, we sat again in the banquet hall, and had eaten heavily, and were drinking the King's wine. And again the deep voice of Moses rang through the hall:

"The Lord God of the Hebrews,"* he cried, "has sent me to you, O Pharaoh, saying, 'Let my people go, that they may build an altar in the wilderness and serve me!'"

Tut-ankh-Ammon started up and hurled at Moses his golden cup. But the cup rang upon the stone pavement a man's length from the sandals of the Prophet's feet. And the Pharaoh spoke hoarsely:

"The Lord your God is an insistent god. Now wherefore trouble me at my feasting? If he is a god of might, show me some miracle!"

And Moses said to Aaron his brother, "Cast your rod before Pharaoh and it shall become a serpent."

Then Aaron cast down his white rod and it became a serpent and writhed upon the floor.

And Pharaoh called to him Pathenthis the chief magician and Jannes and Jambres of Karnak who were present, and said:

"You behold the magic of the One God. But this is an ancient wonder of our magicians. Show then unto Moses and Aaron that the trick of the serpent is no miracle!"

And the magician Pathenthis cast down his staff and it became a serpent, and Jannes and Jambres laughed and cast down their staffs, and these also became serpents.

Then said Moses: "The serpent that was Aaron's staff is mightier than the serpents of Ammon!"

And he reached out a white hand over the serpent that was Aaron's staff and it glided shimmering in the yellow torchlight across the pavement: and one by one, it swallowed the serpents of Ammon! And the guests at the feast gasped at the marvel.

Now surely this wonder was beyond the ordinary tricks of the magicians. Yet Tut-ankh-Ammon hardened his heart, and sent the prophets forth from the hall.

That night, I was given rooms in the Double House, and the next morning early went down with the King and the Lords of the Double House to the River Nile to bathe. And Moses and Aaron were there before us, waiting on the shore. And the rod that had been changed to a serpent was in Moses' hand.

Moses said unto Pharaoh again, "The Lord of the Hebrews has sent me to you, saying: 'Let my people go. Behold, to this moment, you would not let my people go. Now that you shall know I am sent unto you by the One God, I will smite with this rod the waters of the river, and they and all the waters of Egypt save only the water in Goshen and in the houses of them that serve me,

shall be turned to blood. And the fish shall die and the river shall stink, and all Egypt shall refuse to drink of the water!"

Moses smote the waters of the Nile and they became as blood. Now, to change water into blood or wine is also an ancient wonder of the magicians, O Minos: yet Moses smote only the river; but all the water in Egypt in that instant was transformed into blood. And to increase the marvel, O Minos: the water of the Hebrews and that of my Cretans upon the galley remained pure and clear.

And the chief magician Pathenthis did this trick also: for Ammon was now caught up in rivalry with the power of the One God and had to continue in the contest as long as his magic would permit. And the changing of the waters into blood was the first of the Ten Plagues of Egypt.

Neither did this wonder move the Pharaoh to let the Hebrews go. And Moses stretched forth his hand, and behold there came forth from the waters a multitude of frogs and covered the land of Egypt and filled the chambers and came upon the beds. And this moved not Pharaoh. So then Moses brought forth from the dust a plague of lice, and the lice covered even those in the Palace of the King, save only Hathane and the aged Thermuthis the foster-mother of Moses, for these two worshiped the One God, and those also upon my galley were free of the plague of lice. And Pathenthis and the priests sought by their enchantments to bring forth lice out of the dust and they could not: and from that time forth through all the plagues that fell upon Egypt Pathenthis and Jannes and Jambres were discomfited, defeated by the miracles of Jehovah.

The fourth plague was of flies. The fifth plague was a murrain upon the cattle that were in the fields, upon the horses and the asses and the camels, upon the oxen and the sheep, and all the cattle in Egypt died save only the cattle of the Israelites in the land of Goshen.

But the Pharaoh would not let the people go. So Moses brought on a great plague of boils; and Tut-ankh-Ammon sent in haste for Pathenthis and the priests to perform this miracle, and they could not stand before the Pharaoh for the torment of their boils. Yet no worshiper of the One God suffered from this sixth plague.

The seventh plague was of hail and of fire, that broke the trees of the field and laid flat all standing crops. The eighth was of locusts, that swarmed over all Egypt even as the frogs and the lice had done, coming in clouds like smoke and filling the houses and the locusts devoured every green thing. And the ninth plague was a plague worse than all these: for three days, Moses brought upon Egypt a thick darkness, and the Egyptians cried out to Pharaoh and were sore afraid. But the Pharaoh would not let the people go.

AND THEN, O MINOS, the Lord God of the Hebrews lost all patience with the Ruler of Egypt; and the Angel of the Lord passed over Egypt in the night and slew the eldest son in every household—yea, even the eldest and only son of the Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon died that night. And Egypt wept.

And the Pharaoh rose early, and sent in haste for Moses and for Aaron his brother, and told Moses to lead his people forth, with their flocks and their herds, for Egypt could endure no more.

The Egyptians charge that the Hebrews, in the hour of their going, went into the houses of the Egyptians and took what they would of jewels and of precious things, and the host of the Israelites went forth out of Egypt. And I heard that they were encamped presently at Ethan that lies on the edge of the wilderness.

Then came to me Maat-Ammon from the House of the Pharaoh to say that the Pharaoh had called forth his own army, the King's Army of Thebes, and that he was

*The passage which follows is very nearly the same as in *Exodus*, greatly reduced.

gathering his chariots and his horsemen on the western shore to pursue the people of Moses and to bring them to Egypt, to make bricks without straw again.

I called Agrestes and told him that I would go.

And Agrestes and my counselors urged that I stay upon the ship, for they feared the power of the One God, that His wrath would turn against me should I join in pursuit of His people.

And I answered them: "Behold, Moses said unto me, 'You will pursue them,' and I said unto Moses, 'I will not pursue them, for your God is my God.' And Moses said, 'Behind all things I ask, there is a purpose of the Most High. You will go forth with the Pharaoh and pursue us, even to the shores of the Red Sea.' But Moses said, 'Walk not on the dry bed of the Red Sea, lest the flood take you also.'"

"The Prophet spoke in riddles," said the Fox. "Who can understand him?"

"I will understand, by the Red Sea," said I. And I went forth, Orestos taking me in the small boat to the royal landing. And when I neared the Double House, Hathane was walking before the portal.

"O rash son of Phrasyll!" she cried. "Must you also join in this mad hunting of an unhappy people? Why can't my brother, why can't Egypt, let them go in peace? I fear—oh, I fear what the god Jehovah will do unto us, if we pursue! I fear, Bronze Warrior—oh, I fear!"

"At the top of the steps leading down to the Death House of your brother," I said, "Moses bade me to go. He has a task for me: therefore I must go."

And Hathane the daughter of Pharaoh came up close to me. I could smell the fragrance of lilies in her black hair. And all heedless whether any saw or not, she threw her arms around my neck and wept upon my shoulder.

"It is the end of all happiness for you and for me," she said, "the end of hope. For, ere my brother went forth to join his captains, he swore that I should not wed any worshiper of the God who had lost him the Hebrews. My brother says Egypt will be poor, now the slaves are gone."

I laughed. "Egypt poor? Nay, in this land, gold is commoner than dust. But be brave in this dark time, my Lotus-flower, for the Lord our God has not yet failed us—and I will verily bear you away to Crete as my wife! By the power of the Living God, I will never let you go! And now I must join the Pharaoh."

"Wait!" she cried. "I have heard you have been taught to drive a chariot by the King's Captain. So I will fetch you a chariot for your journey."

And she went, running, and came again, leading two black horses—and lo! they were appareled in the King's harness and the chariot was the King's chariot of gold.

Then I cried out: "Nay, Hathane! For when your brother beholds me in his most treasured chariot, he will send for a swordsman to run me through!"

Hathane laughed. "I said to my brother, this morning, 'If I wed not the Bronze Warrior, I will not wed any man. But he has in him a high spirit, and I think, when the army of Egypt is marching, the Bronze Warrior will not tarry in his ship.'"

"And my brother the King said: 'You think the young Cretan will ride forth at my side in pursuit of the Hebrews?'"

"And I answered him: 'Yea, verily.' And the King said: 'He worships Jehovah the One God. Surely, he will not ride!'"

"And then I answered Tut-ankh-Ammon and said: 'Brother, if the Bronze Warrior decide to pursue with you, he will come first to the Palace to bid me farewell. And I will lay you a wager that he will come.'"

"And my brother said: 'I take the wager: name what you will.'"

"And I said: 'If the Bronze Warrior come, he will ride in your best chariot, the gold one made for your House

of Death, and he will drive your two coal-black steeds to keep by you in this hunting!'"

"So be it," said my brother, and laughed. 'But of a surety the Bronze Warrior will not ride.'"

And I kissed Hathane, mounted the golden car, and driving the King's chariot, rode forth to meet the King.

CHAPTER TEN



TUT-ANKH-AMMON was already in his chariot when I drove up. And when he beheld me driving his black horses in the splendor of his own best chariot, he cried out while I was yet far off:

"So Hathane wins the wager! Welcome, Cretan! We will show a thing to the Jews this day! Keep by my side in this riding. I will bring them back with a heavy hand; they shall build altars, but not to their god! I will teach the dogs to worship! Aye, under the rod will I cause them to bow down, under the rod shall they fall prostrate before the image of Ammon! Let their god hear me, let him do his utmost to save his people now! For this is the hour, O heretic stranger, when you shall behold Ammon triumph over Israel!"

"Turn back while there is time, O Pharaoh!" I begged. "For in my heart I behold blackness and ruin and death for Pharaoh and for Egypt—aye, and for the host of the King!"

"The Cretan is afraid!" cried Tut-ankh-Ammon. "Drive back to the Palace! Go gather lotus-buds and sit with Hathane in an arbor and make love! When the army of Egypt marches, there moves in its ranks only men!"

"The Cretan is afraid!" cried Tut-ankh-Ammon. "Drive back to the Palace! Go gather lotus-buds and sit with Hathane in an arbor and make love! When the army of Egypt marches, there moves in its ranks only men!"

I looked coldly at the Pharaoh, unmoved by his biting words. "When has the Pharaoh of Egypt beheld fear in the face of the Bronze Warrior?" I asked. "In this hour, the host of Egypt sets forth to pursue the people of the Living God. It is not for the Bronze Warrior that I fear. O Pharaoh, but for the Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon, for the army of Egypt!"

"By Ptah! By Sokar!" cried the Pharaoh in wrath. "This is the King's own army! Behold the serried ranks of infantry in shining brass! The chariots and the horsemen, conquerors of the world! And you, Cretan, fear for these? By Sokar, the sun of Egypt softens your brain!"

"Name not the god of death as you move your host onward against the Living God!" I cried, and said no more.

And we rode on and the host also, the captains and the chariots and the horsemen.

Now there came galloping a messenger whom the Captain of Chariots had sent forth to spy out the Hebrews. And this man reported that the Hebrews were beyond Pi-hahiroth and marching already between Migdol and the Red Sea. And we pursued the people of Israel through that wilderness.

And we overtook the fleeing host before Baal-zephon by the Red Sea. And the moving nation and their flocks and their herds raised a great dust; and I beheld terror overtake them, and they fled before us.

And beyond the people of Israel, as if leading them. I beheld a great shining column that seemed to reach from the earth to the stars—a column like a cloud in an Egyptian sunset bathed in light in the west: even that same splendor that saved me between the Valley of the Dead Kings and the Nile. And the shining column of cloud moved onward, and the people followed.

Behold, that splendid army of Egypt, the host in shining brass, halted at sight of the pillar of cloud; and even the priests of Ammon that were with us were afraid.

Yea, the High Priest of Karnak brought forth an image of his god, and strewed upon the floor of the wilderness his silver sands, and set his idol upon it. And the High Priest burned incense before Ammon and prayed to his god.

But Pharaoh cried out furiously:

"Who bade the army of Egypt to halt? Behold, the slaves are before you! Are you sheep, to be scared by a low-hanging cloud? Up, warriors of Egypt! Forward! Round up these cattle, the Israelites! And when you have them, let one in every ten be slain, that they may remember this day and the worship of the Israelite god that led them to ruin! And if the dogs resist, smite them down! Charge!"

The army shouted; they clashed their arms and shouted. And the splendor of Egypt's host swept toward Baal-zephon by the sea.

Aye, the chariot wheels thundered, and the very earth seemed to shake under the tread of the foot-men and the horsemen, under the roll of the chariots of Pharaoh. And I loosened the reins and let the black horses fly over the land. All this time, I kept close to the Pharaoh's side.

We came to a little height that rose above the people of Israel. I could not clearly see, at first, what had happened: but a mighty East wind had sprung up, blowing across the Red Sea, and clouds gathered there and there only, and we heard the roar of the thunder and saw the lightning flashing above surging green waves.

"Hold fast your horses and watch!" shouted Tut-anekh-Ammon to me. "We have them! We have them! This will be worth watching, O Ammon triumphant! Where now is their unknown god!"

Even as he spoke, the waters of the Red Sea were slashed as by the knife of a god. At one gigantic stroke, the bed of the sea was laid bare from the nearer to the farther shore! And the waters by that dry path were heaped to the sky in towering walls of dark green and boiling waters upon the left and upon the right.

From where I stood in the chariot of gold, I saw two small figures that I knew were Moses and Aaron fare boldly into that dry way, and the host of the Israelites followed with all their flocks and their herds.

The army of Egypt, the splendid host, halted as one man. The seasoned warriors trembled. And for a long time the Pharaoh stood in his chariot frowning in black wrath and sore amaze. There was a spell upon the host and upon the Pharaoh that held them as rooted to the earth. And the Israelites had almost reached the other shore, when Tut-anekh-Ammon shook himself and shouted to the Captain of Chariots:

"Behold, the way of pursuit is open! Why stand you idle? After them! If the Hebrews dare cross the Red Sea dryshod, between the walls of water, shall Egypt's might stand quaking on the shore? Forward!"

The Captain of the Chariots shouted to the army; trumpets blared; and the Egyptian host broke into a gallop and made for the path across the sea. And when they were streaming into the dry path, the Pharaoh cried out to me:

"The Hebrew magicians have bespelled us! We have lost our wits—the army leads us! After them! Follow!"

And the chariot of the Pharaoh rumbled down toward the sea; and I after him.

As the Pharaoh was about to drive his steeds into that dry way, I heard a shouting ahead: the wheels had come off the chariots in the lead and the road was blocked; and horses and men churned about in a deep mud, and confusion fell upon the host of Egypt. And the waters of the two lofty walls curdling in rage against the black sky moved inward, the wall on the right hand toward the wall upon the left.

Then the Pharaoh drove his horses into the dry way. And as he entered in at a gallop in the lead of me, the mighty walls of water burst, and the flood poured upon

the army of Egypt with a sound as of deep calling unto deep, upon infantry in shining brass, upon horseman, upon chariot. In one great tumult of boiling fury the two walls of water thundered together. And the army of Egypt was drowned.

I sprang from the golden chariot and into the flood: for I could see in that smother the body of the King rolled violently in the tumult. And lo! the swirling waters smoothed before me, and swimming with great strokes, I reached the Pharaoh and I dragged him by the neck to the shore.

O Minos! Of all that splendor of men, the Egyptian host that rode against Israel—only the Pharaoh and I rode back to Thebes!

And I came up out of the Red Sea with the body of Tut-anekh-Ammon as if lifeless in my arms, and I bore him to the golden chariot. And I drove the black horses back to Thebes across the wilderness, the Pharaoh lying as if dead in the chariot at my feet, and I not knowing what I should say to the people: for the army of Egypt was dead.

And I drove the chariot in by the Way of the Sphinxes, and came to the Double House. And the people of the palace streamed forth to meet us. But I could stand no more; exhausted by the struggle in the Red Sea and that long ride, I fell from the chariot before the great portal, at full length upon the ground.

And Hathane aroused me, my head in her lap.

"What has befallen?" she cried. "Where is the army?"

And I tried to speak, but I could not speak.

And the Lord of the King's Household ran up, panting, and cried out.

"Where is the Army of Egypt?"

And the beautiful queen ran forth from the palace, and went to the King, and knelt beside him in her tears, thinking him dead; and Ankh-sen-paten cried out to me:

"Is my husband the King dead? Oh, Bronze Warrior, where is the army of Egypt?"

HER cry broke through the Pharaoh's coma. He stirred and opened his eyes, and cried out weakly:

"We came upon the Israelites before Baal-zephon, and they were cut off, they and their cattle; but before them across the wide Red Sea from shore to shore the prophet Moses opened a path by his magic—nay, nay! The One God by his power made a dry way across the Red Sea, and the Hebrews passed over dryshod. And I, Pharaoh of Upper and Lower Egypt—I—I—" He stopped and panted to get his breath. "I who have been blind, accursed of God, commanded the army to follow—into that dry way; and the army of Egypt rode in after the Israelites; and I watched them go and followed them."

And the Queen and others near cried out: "*But where is the army of Egypt?*"

And the Pharaoh, his voice fainter, answered them:

"The walls stood upon the right hand and upon the left, the walls of water terrible to behold. And the river burst those walls and thundered upon us!"

"And the last thing I knew until this moment, was that the Bronze Warrior came to me, breasting the furious sea, and took hold of me and dragged me toward the shore!"

The crowd was silenced in a great panic and a great grief. And in this silence, the Pharaoh cried in loud voice:

"Horsemen and chariots! The captains and the soldiers! All gone—all drowned! *The army of Egypt is dead!*"

He raised himself weakly upon his right elbow, and cried shrilly again:

"The Bronze Warrior saved me from the flood. The Lord the One God again is the God of the Pharaoh!"

And he fell back, gasping. But he called too late. Tut-anekh-Ammon, the Pharaoh of Egypt, was dead.



TUT-ANKH-AMMON was dead. Now the very blackness of death descended upon me, also: for the treaty was not signed—and Hathane still unattained. And Haremheb the uncle of Hathane was to be enthroned.

There came into Egypt an emissary from the King of Babylon to sue for Hathane of the new Pharaoh, for the beauty of Hathane had spread through all the world. The King of Phaestos renewed his suit with new ardor. And the Pharaoh Haremheb, I learned, was a grim and silent man, of unknown talents in the art of government, who will bring, men say in Thebes, little glory unto Egypt, and whose character or mind no man could tell.

As soon as I heard these things, I crossed the river and went to the Double House in quest of Haremheb. And I found him in the courtyard beyond the feasting chamber, seated in the summerhouse alone.

His grim, dark face stared out at me as I came hurrying up the walk. And I bowed to him and stood silent.

"Come into the summerhouse, Bronze Warrior," he commanded gruffly. "Come out of the sun. We are alone, and I am not yet crowned. For yet a little, let me do without ceremony. What would you of Haremheb?"

"I am anxious about the treaty, and about Ha—"

"I am not yet crowned Pharaoh," Haremheb interrupted hastily. "The body of Tut-ankh-Ammon is gone to the embalmers—and this, as you know, takes time; and thereafter it must journey to Abydos to receive the barley bread and the incense of Osiris. And the funeral will follow. I will be crowned within two days; but affairs of state must wait until the late Pharaoh is in his eternal house."

I entered the summerhouse, and he who was soon to be ruler of Egypt made me to sit down by him, in his presence. He toyed, as he talked, with a lotus-bud in his left hand. And I said:

"I am direct of speech, Lord Haremheb. Surely, you can tell me now if you are for or against the treaty with Crete?"

"You make two requirements to a renewal of the treaty, as I remember," said Haremheb, not looking at me but down at the lotus-bud in his hand. "You ask for ten galleys of war to help against the pirates of the farther Mid Sea, and you ask for Hathane to be your wife, to bind our friendship."

"My sun stands still until I know your will!" I cried. "You are young and impetuous," answered Haremheb. "These matters can wait. As to the galleys: Egypt has lost an army and a race of slaves. How in this troubled hour can Egypt spare ten galleys and the warriors to man them?"

"Egypt still has slaves," said I, "and other armies; and Egypt, O Pharaoh to be, is rich. And Crete has been true friend to Egypt through centuries."

"Well—well. I am almost of a mind to sign no treaty," declared Haremheb, and he held the lotus-bud to his nostrils. "How sweet is the breath of the lotus, Bronze Warrior! And as to the Princess Hathane—hm. Know you not the King of Babylon sues for her? To speak not of your countryman, the King of Phaestos?"

"Of what service to Egypt will alliance with Babylon be?" I exclaimed. "Babylon goes her way. She is far off and unfriendly. The beauty of Hathane moves the King of Babylon: but if the King of Babylon resolves on war with Egypt, he will fight; if he thinks it wise to keep the peace with Egypt, he will keep the peace, he will be friends—whether you give him Hathane or not. The King of Babylon is too proud and feels himself too great to show anger, should you deny his suit."

Haremheb gave me a strange glance I could not fathom. "You are a wise counselor," he said dryly. "But what of this countryman of yours? Know you he has sworn in my hearing you shall not return to Labyrinth alive?"

And again he smelled the lotus in his hand.

"One of us two, O Haremheb, will not return."

"He delivered you to the priests of Ammon," said Haremheb, rubbing his long chin. "He was privy to the poison in your cup at the feasting."

I was silent.

"I like not double-dealers and plotters," said Haremheb. "Every Pharaoh upon his throne must deal with such. Now tell me, Bronze Warrior: was not Tut-ankh-Ammon your enemy because of your God?"

"I know not the late Pharaoh's heart," said I. "Let Osiris answer! At times, Tut-ankh-Ammon was friendly."

"You knew he was your foe," said Haremheb. "The influence of his sister Hathane alone kept you from trouble. Yet you saved Tut-ankh-Ammon from the Red Sea. Why?"

"Crete has always been friend to Egypt," I said. "And Hathane was fond of him—the Pharaoh was Hathane's brother."

Haremheb grunted. "He might have lived," he said, as if thinking aloud, "and borne a second son. Had he lived—I would not now be ruler of Egypt. I wonder—I wonder—"

I waited, watching a green lizard climbing the wall. "When you saved the Pharaoh," he said, with the dawn of a smile, "was the act friendly or hostile to Haremheb?"

"It was neither," I insisted. "I knew you not."

"I will say to you what I say to no other man living," said the man soon to wear the weight of the Double Crown, looking down again at the lotus-bud in his hand. "I did not seek this glory. I would rather live in my country house and manage my estates. Do you seek to marry Hathane for the power of the alliance with Egypt—or for love of the woman?"

I looked Haremheb in the eyes. "The power is nothing to me," I said. "I love the Princess."

"I will make a weak Pharaoh," said Haremheb. "Come to me again when I am crowned, and I will weigh these matters as Osiris weighs the heart. Now, one question more—and having answered, leave me to my thoughts. What think you of Haremheb?"

"You are sterner in the face than in the heart," I answered him. "You will rule Egypt firmly, gently, wisely—and Egypt will have peace."

The great lord rose and bowed. "It is an oracle!" he said. "Haremheb thanks the Bronze Warrior. When the new Pharaoh needs near him one true in speech and heart, he will not forget to summon the Bronze Warrior to Thebes!"

And he gave into my hand the lotus-bud.

But Haremheb, I told myself as I went from his presence, had revealed nothing of his purpose as to the treaty or as to Hathane.

Haremheb knew what he would do. I did not know then that he had verily revealed both himself and his purpose toward Hathane and toward me.

CHAPTER TWELVE



THE white oxen, in the course of a few weeks, bore the mummy of the Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon to that chamber in the rock where, one night, I had lain hidden from the living king. And I saw the golden chariot placed beside the splendid casing of the Pharaoh's chest of rock; and I saw the lovely statue of Queen Ankhsenpaten standing in the chamber

of death beside him. The treasures beloved of Tut-ankh-Ammon were laid away, with flowers and with food, with his throne-chair and his bed of state.

I beheld Haremheb the new Pharaoh crowned, and the four white doves set free to north and south and east and west, to carry to all the gods the news that a new Pharaoh sat on Egypt's timeless throne. . . . And I seeing all things numbly, as one stricken: for indeed all seemed lost to me—the new Treaty, the ships of war, Hathane the Huntress. Weeks passed—and I scarce knew that time was passing.

I emerged one morning from the portal of the King's Palace and stood by the stone hieraconsphinx looking toward the Garden of Tiy and the persea trees by the shining lake. And one sprang forth from behind the hawk-headed image and struck at me with his sword.

I saw the shadow before I saw the man, and sprang back in time or that blow would have riven my skull. And my sword leaped into my hand.

The King of Phaestos and I fought furiously by the sphinx. He pressed me hard; and now I fought for the Treaty, for Hathane, for life itself. At the moment of peril, I heard a step behind me and a shadow fell slantwise across me, and the shade of an arm raised to strike.

If I turned my eyes from Phaestos, his sword would be in my heart. If I avoided not the shadow-casting arm, the knife would be in my back. I fought on desperately, praying to the One God to deliver me from traitors.

Behind me sounded a strange thud and a groan, and armor clanged upon the paved way; and a body rolled by me. A broad arrow was shot through and through it; and the long knife of bronze he had, rattled to the stones at Phaestos' feet.

As I thrust fiercely at Phaestos, he looked down—and my blade passed through him and shivered its point upon the hieraconsphinx.

Then I looked back. Near a clump of persea trees the Princess Hathane stood, and several with her. And her bow was in her hand.

"Good hunting in Egypt," called Hathane, "even by the Palace of the King, Bronze Warrior! The one who took the arrow was poised to plant his dagger in your back."

"You shoot straight, O Lotus-flower!" I exclaimed.

She laughed. "I shoot for a prize," she said.

"For what prize?" I asked, still too astonished at the trap from which she had saved me, to think clearly.

"The ankh, the sacred ankh," she said. "I have triumphed! Have patience, O stormy heart! In yet a few hours, the ankh I won shall be delivered to you—and on *Minos-eye*."

And she blew a kiss to me, laughed, and was gone up the paved way to the palace doors. . . . Now, the ankh is the symbol of life.

And I stooped down, drew forth my blade, and wiped it on the grass. For a moment, I looked down upon the dead and treacherous king.

"You had in you some manhood, no doubt," said I; "but the gods never revealed it to me. I slew you, not for the crown of Phaestos, which Moses has given me by his magic, but for Hathane and our love. The Princess saved me from the death you planned. The King of Phaestos is dead! And yet—the King of Phaestos lives—for I am King of Phaestos now! Coward lord, good night."

I descended to the royal landing. Orestos took me in the bark. So ended, O Minos, your enemy and mine. But give your thanks to Hathane, Diana of Egypt.

Orestos, on our way across the river Nile, was silent. His usually cheerful face looked set and sad, as if inward emotion surged up in him.

"The King of Phaestos is dead," said I.

"Ha! Then, in this hour, you are King!" he cried. "How died the traitor lord?"

"By my sword," said I, and I bared the blade and showed the broken point.

"Then you did not choose the quarrel nor strike the first blow," said Orestos.

"He ambushed me by the great hieraconsphinx as you come down from the portal of the Double House," said I. "He hid behind the hawk-headed stone; but I saw his shadow and dodged in time."

"There was more to it than that," said Orestos. "You ever spared his life, because you were in succession. It was a trap?"

"Metal boots crunched on the pavement behind me, and a second shadow fell across me—aye, the shadow of an uplifted arm. I was waiting for the blow, praying the mail under my tunic would turn the bronze, when I heard a thud and a groan. A mailed one fell like a meal-sack and rolled past my feet, and the bronze knife meant for my heart clattered to the toes of Phaestos' golden boots."

"How died the dog?" cried Orestos.

"By a broad arrow," said I, "that smote him through and through. And I dared not take my eyes from Phaestos, who was making me jump for my life's sake, Orestos; and having blocked a blow and recovered, I thrust. At that moment, Phaestos stared down at the knife. My blade took him in the heart and shattered against the sphinx at his back."

"By what hand became you King of Phaestos?" exclaimed Orestos.

"By the hand of the Diana of Egypt," said I.

"The Princess Hathane!" cried Lord Orestos.

"She stood by the persea trees southward of the great drive, and her bow was in her hand. And she so little, so delicate, turned not a hair at the death-scene, but cried, 'Good hunting in Egypt!' and went into the Palace again."

As I spoke, I glanced toward *Minos-eye*, which we were nearing—and there, tied up to her side, lay a long black galley; and the pennant of the dolphin at her mast-head.

"A courier from the Great King!" I cried. "Orestos, why were you silent!"

"There is news from Crete," said Orestos, looking down. "Agrestes awaits you in the Royal House with the ivory box."

NOW, O MINOS, I KNEW OF COURSE, when he named the ivory box, that it was that gold and ivory casket in which you send forth royal disks. And I ask your forgiveness, O King of Kings—for I have broken the ivory box.

I knew at once events of moment would transpire to me out of Labyrinth. My heart grew heavy with foreboding.

I boarded the galley in haste and ran down the steps to the Royal House. Lord Agrestes stood by the throne-seat, the gold and ivory casket of Minos in his hand. And the flames from the alabaster lamp seemed plating his figure with gold. I, wordless, took from him the casket of the King of Kings, and broke the seals, and drew forth the royal disks.

Agrestes went down on one knee to me, and cried: "Sit down before you read, O Lord of men!"

I answered mechanically: "I am not yet king—"

But he was silent. So I sat in Minos' seat and my eyes fell upon the topmost disk; and I read:

TO MY TRUE LORD, MYENIDES KING OF HAGGIA, GREETING:

And I sprang up. The precious casket of ivory and gold smashed upon the cabin deck.

"Alas, the Minos' box!" cried Agrestes.

"O God of Gods!" I cried, raising my arms high. "My father is dead."

"I have word of this also," said Agrestes. "I loved him too, even as a son loves a father of his blood. But there

is other news. *You are to spread wings for Crete this night!*"

I sank back into the royal seat, and fell into a sort of trance. Presently I became aware I was alone. But there was a flagon of wine beside me, and an electron cup, And I poured a brimming cup and drank, and filled and drank again.

Alas, O Green Isle of my birth! In one fierce blow I lose—my father and my Lotus-flower!

From Hathane, later on that day of our sailing, there came a little strip of parchment, on which her scribe had written:

BELOVED:

You have lost a father and I a friend. Moses the Prophet once told me: "Blessed are you among the daughters of Egypt, O Hathane! Though your house shall be abased, yet you shall become queen in a far land and rule with him to whom your heart cleaves, and you shall bear him sons."

Sorrow not, O true one! The end is not yet, nor the Bronze Warrior forgotten in the Double House. Even in this hour of death I salute you, my Lord, with the ankh of LIFE.

The Lord our Unknown God, the One, hold you in the hollow of his hand!

Hathane,

Princess of Egypt

I went forth from the galley, took the little bark, and crossed the river. And I was pacing toward the Garden of Tiy, when there appeared several walking back from the shining lake. And one of these came on and stopped by me.

Behold, it was the new Pharaoh Haremheb, and the Double Crown of Egypt was upon his head. And to him for the first time I raised both arms in royal salute.

And behold, the grim-faced one raised his arms also and gave me back the salute due a king.

"The gods have brought sorrow to your house," said Haremheb. "I salute you, King of Haggia. The Treaty is signed; you get your ships of war. But there was also another matter—a second suit that you laid before me?"

I bowed my head.

"Such matters as the marriage of the daughter of a Pharaoh are decided not by the Pharaoh only, but by the King's Council," said he. "Surely you know this! And you are aware also that the King of Babylon sues for Hathane. And you know it would have influence with the Council to know that the prince who sues for Hathane is now a king. Yet you were silent. Why?"

"O Rising Sun!" I exclaimed. "Your heart is just. Therefore I was content to let things lie as they were between us. For I said to my heart, which burned within me, this ruler of men has understanding beyond that of the Pharaoh who is dead. He knows well who are his friends, whom he can trust.

"Prince or King, I shall know my suit is safe when in the Hall of State the Pharaoh Haremheb sits in judgment. Let your decision, O King of Kings, be moved not by princeship nor by kingdom.

"To whose keeping will the Pharaoh deliver the daughter of Pharaoh? What house shall be made strong by the blood of the rulers of Egypt? I am as I am. The Princess Hathane is a treasure beyond jewels, beyond gold, beyond kingdoms. I ask justice from the Pharaoh—for her, the woman, and for me, the man."

"I hear, also, that you must sail tonight," said Haremheb, "for I too have letters from Minos. At what hour do you sail?"

"We shall drop downriver by light of the full moon, one hour after sunset, the gods permitting," I told him. "Return to your galley," he said. "Go not abroad. Between now and then, I will come in state, bearing the Treaty with Labyrinth, and for you—a gift, which I ask you to accept in memory of your visit in Egypt."

"The God of Gods make prosperous your reign!"

He bowed without answer. I returned to the ship.

Nor could I, knowing Egypt and the guile of kings, be certain that I had read aright the heart of Haremheb. Yet surely that stern face befuddled the world! What were the thoughts of Haremheb under that heavy Double Crown?

And I sat in the Royal House and sweated in the agony of waiting. Must I sail for Crete and leave my soul in Thebes? But she had promised she would see me again—once again—ere we spread the red leather, ere we moved the great sweeps. Once again!

The trumpets rang on the shore. And I ran up from the cabin.

Behold the face of the night was as if bathed in the light of the sun! A thousand torches turned to day the wharf and the near-by shore. And there were arrayed the Egyptian host, the horses and the chariots, the armor burning in the light, the royal pennants flying, the great drums throbbing; and the royal fan-bearers came aboard Minos-eye, and the Lords of Council.

Then came the Pharaoh Haremheb. And after him eight Friends of the Pharaoh, bearing the royal litter of the Princess Hathane. Aye, I knew well its purple hangings sewn with blue gems that glimmered like blue waters in the torchlight—and its royal plumes so red and white tossing in the north wind! And the litter, they set down upon the deck before me.

The Pharaoh Haremheb advanced to meet me. He bore in his left hand the scepter and in his right two papyrus rolls bound together with silken cords red and white. And Haremheb said:

"To you, Myenides the Bronze Warrior, King of Haggia, Friend of the Pharaoh, we Egypt deliver a perpetual treaty of friendship. With the approval of the Council, we send after you ten ships of war fully manned and armed.

"In memory of your stay, and because in the disaster of the Red Sea you saved the Pharaoh Tut-ankh-Ammon from the waters' rage, we give to you that object most precious in your sight; the royal litter of the Princess Hathane! May your God give you a swift and safe voyage!"

Blinded by my tears, my heart breaking at the disappointment of the gift, at first I did not see the purple curtains parting, the small dear figure descending.

"O my Bronze Warrior!" cried a soft voice.

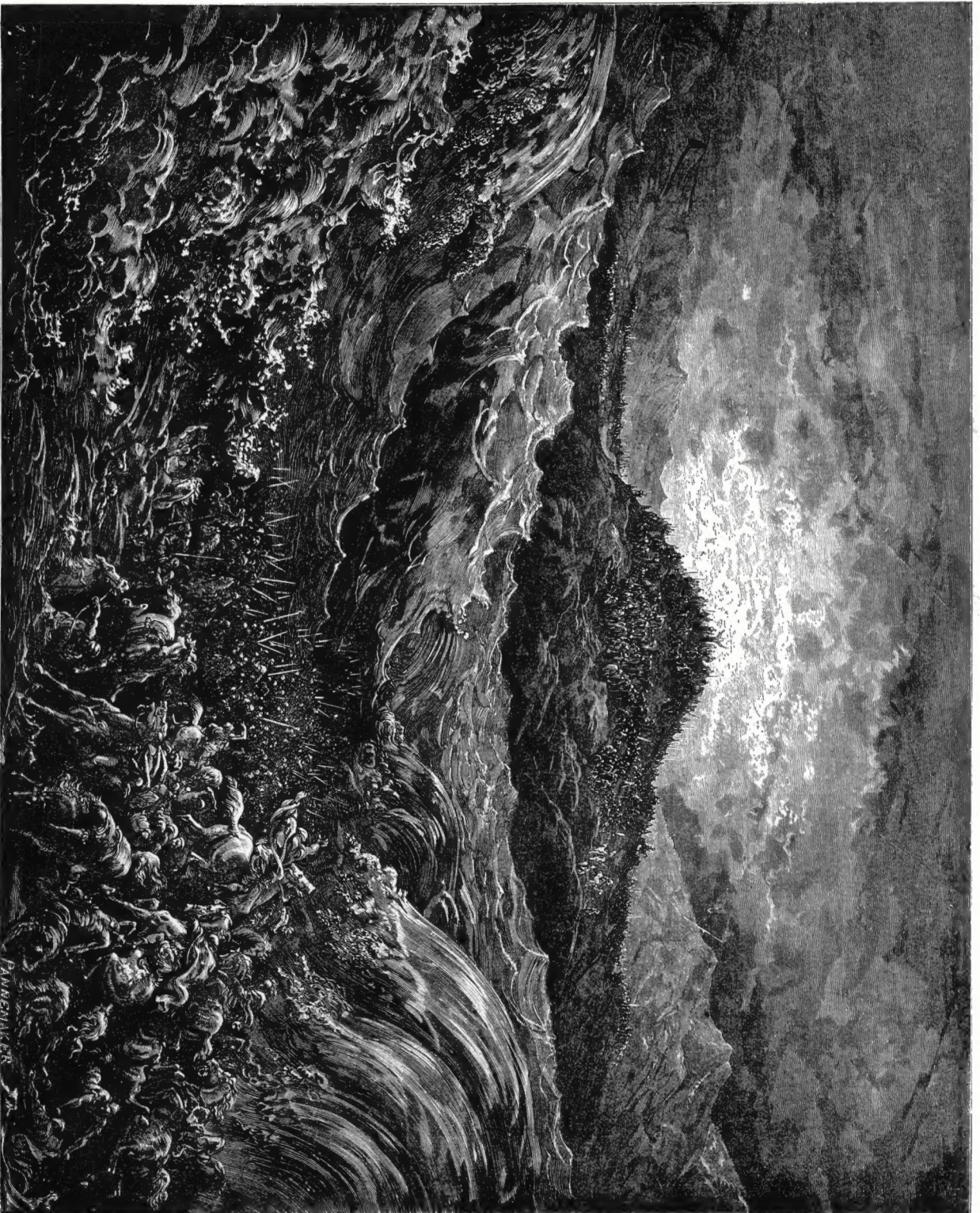
Darkly lovely in diaphanous robes, Hathane the Daughter of Pharaoh came to me. In her left hand she bore a royal ostrich plume; in her right, the sacred ankh of life. And into my shaking hand she passed her jeweled ankh.

"O Lord my King!" she cried in trembling voice. "Into your keeping, beyond the measures of time, I deliver the Ba and the Kha and the Khu and the Body of the Daughter of Pharaoh!"

The stern-faced Pharaoh Haremheb looked at me, nor did he smile.

"Did you not understand," he asked, "when I gave you the lotus-bud?"





Pharaoh's
Army
Drowns
in the
Red Sea

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